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The Girl Avenger. 89



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This image shows a blank, aged, cream-colored page, likely an endpaper or flyleaf of a book. The paper has a slightly textured appearance with some minor discoloration and faint, irregular markings, possibly from handling or age. The page is oriented vertically and is set against a dark background.

THE
GIRL AVENGER;
OR,
THE BEAUTIFUL TERROR OF THE MAUMEE.

THE BEAUTIFUL TERROR OF THE MAUMEE.

BY CAPT. CHAS. HOWARD,

AUTHOR OF THE FOLLOWING POCKET NOVELS:

- | | |
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| 45. THE ELK-KING. | 65. WOLF-CAP. |
| 50. THE WOLF QUEEN. | 69. THE YELLOW HUNTER. |
| 52. THE MAD CHIEF. | 72. SILVER RIFLE. |
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| 64. THE ISLAND TRAPPER. | 87. PHIL HUNTER. |

NEW YORK:

BEADLE AND ADAMS PUBLISHERS,

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THE
GIRL AVENGER
THE RECAPTIVE TERROR OF THE WARRIOR

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THE GIRL AVENGER;

OR,

THE BEAUTIFUL TERROR OF THE MAUMEE.

CHAPTER I.

STRICKEN OVER THE DEAD.

It was evening among the stately cottonwoods and poplars that lined the banks of the Maumee, and the dying day an August one in the year 1794.

A stag approached the historic stream to quench his thirst.

The proud king of the Ohio wood walked with antlered head erect; but his cautious tread denoted that he suspected the proximity of hidden foes. His eyes swept the wood on his left and right, and the opposite bank of the stream underwent a close scrutiny as he advanced.

Quite unmolested he reached the limpid water, and bathed his nozzle therein with manifest delight. It was a halcyon moment for his stagship.

But suddenly a puff of smoke shot above the clumps of wild pansies on the opposite bank, the whip-like crack of a rifle followed, and with an almost human cry the stag staggered from the water's edge, quivered like a stricken vessel, then sunk upon the verdant earth, the red tide of life flowing from a wound over his heart.

The fatal shot was followed by the spring of an Indian from the perfumed pansies, and a moment later he was swimming toward his prey. He breasted the current with the strength of a strong man, for he had nothing to incumber him, having left his empty rifle among the flowers.

He soon gained the stricken deer over which he stooped, and drove the scalping-knife into the delicate throat. A stream of warm blood that made the Indian's hands redder than Nature's coloring, followed the withdrawal of the crimson blade, and the brave rose to his feet with a grunt of satisfaction.

Simultaneously with his rising, the quick sharp yelp of a young she-wolf rent the dense atmosphere, and caused the Indian to spring from his prey toward the nearest cotton-wood.

He never reached the sheltering tree.

The report of a rifle scarce louder than the bursting of a percussion-cap, smote the air ; the slayer of the stag halted in his tracks, threw his hands to his heart, retraced his steps with the reeling of a drunken man, and fell with a groan over the body of his victim.

In the agonies of death, he raised his head over the stag's breast, and his dying eyes caught sight of his slayer ; then they closed to open in the lodge of the red-man's God—his Ka Jai Manitou.

Who shot the Ottawa ?

A lithe figure bounded from behind the gnarled trunk of a monster ash.

The slayer of the Ottawa was a girl, rounding the last month of her sixteenth year !

A form and figure, admirably disclosed by the close-fitting garments, were faultless in grace and proportion, and her oval face was beautiful almost beyond description. The fair white skin, beautified by here and there a dimple, proclaimed the avenger the favored child of health. Her eyes were deep blue, like the patches of sky seen through the interstices of the broad leaves, and a mass of golden hair fell over her shoulders like graceful plumage of orient birds.

She wore a close-fitting hunting-frock, surmounted by a doe-skin cape, the edges of which were fringed with beads, strung on thin sinews. Her nether limbs were clad in elaborately wrought leggings of the same material, cut wide at the bottom, which almost caused the hiding of the moccasins that incased the *petite* feet. From the head drooped the gigantic feathers of the nut-brown heron, and mingled with her golden locks as wavy as the stream toward which she hastened.

At her side trailed the weapon that had dealt death to the Ottawa brave. It was a delicate weapon, quite resembling a sporting gun, but a deadly one, as the dead man before her witnessed. The bore seemed out of proportion to the

long slender barrel, which caught and reflected back from its polished surface the rays of the declining sun. The stock and butt of the gun were ornamented by silver crosses and crescents, arranged in alternate order. The first cross was punctured by many holes, the crescent was disfigured in like manner; then the next cross, and the succeeding crescent wanted two perforations, in the lower horn, of being completed—judging from the systematic perforating of the preceding ornaments.

The history of this Girl Avenger let the following pages detail.

A few bounds brought her to the body of her victim, lying across the stricken stag, and as her little hand drew a tiny scalping-knife from her girdle, a silvery triumphant laugh parted the lips and displayed two rows of pearly teeth.

“Ha! ha! ha!” said the laugh. “Another dark lock for my lone home—another puncture for my crescent—another red-man dead before the avenging rifle! How fast they fall before my eyes! When my gun speaks, the Manitou’s lodge opens to receive a spirit. How long will such work last?” and she glanced at her rifle. “How long? Until the last crescent is full of little holes; then—and not until then—the dead will have been avenged.”

With the last words still quivering on her lips, she stooped and wound the Ottawa’s raven scalp-lock around her left hand. A quick sweep of the scalping-knife, and with the gory scalp clutched in her hand, the Girl Avenger rose to her feet.

“Another brave and the second crescent will be completed,” she said, in French, thrusting the scalp into her girdle. “I know you, Jaguar-tail,” and her gaze fell upon the dead Indian. “Once my gun covered your heart—it was many moons ago—but you saw me, and falling flat in your boat, the rapids of the Miami of the Lake* bore you from my sight. This is my fortieth scalp-lock. Ha! my mark—the seal of the She-wolf. I’d—”

The sentence was broken by the crack of a rifle; the

*The Maumee was designated the *Miami of the Lake* in the early history of Ohio.

avenger's head fell backward ; an abortive shriek terminated on her now pallid lips, which a moment later lay motionless on the cold brow of the Ottawa !

From a clump of undergrowth, near the Ottawa's covert, leaped the burly form of a man, whose shaggy red hair, low forehead, meeting above a short, flat nose, gray sunken eyes, dark and sinister expression of countenance, declared him to be Joe Girty, the dread renegade. He wore the Indian costume, but without ornament, and his crimson handkerchief, while it supplied the place of a hat, hid an unsightly wound on his forehead. On each side, in his belt, was stuck a silver-mounted pistol ; at his left hung a short dirk, serving occasionally the uses of a knife, and, as he ran toward the river, he trailed a clumsy rifle at his right.

"Hell has aided me at last !" he hissed, in triumphant glee, while swimming the stream, with the rifle above his head. "Long have I watched for you, my young She-wolf, and while watching trembled for my life. You are fast depopulating the tribe ; but now I guess as how your yelp—the accursed precursor of death—has been heard for the last time. Won't there be pandemonium in the village to-night, when I walk among the warriors and cast your dead body at their feet ! Oh, Joe Girty, you've did a splendid thing to-day. The slaying of the young She-wolf will make you immortal. Satan remains true to the league you formed with him years ago, and now beneath your rifle, falls the Terror of the Maumee. This— What ! did the She-wolf move her head ?" he cried, as he bent over his victim.

The eyes of the girl opened and closed spasmodically, but without comprehending her situation.

A crimson furrow athwart her temple indicated the course of Joe Girty's ponderous ball.

"By George ! she's not dead, after all !" exclaimed the renegade. "But I'm not sorry—be hanged if I am. I'll carry the She-wolf to the village, and when Coocoochee and Leather-lips get through with their devilish orgies, we'll have a big fire. I know Indians who'll walk a hundred miles to see this girl sizzle. Snakes ! she's pretty. What a glorious squaw she'd make for my boy, Kenowatha ! But she's not for him, no, not for him ! *She's for the fire.*"

A few drops of water restored the girl to consciousness.

She did not shriek when she found herself in the power of Joe Girty. On the contrary, she smiled triumphantly, with a glance at the dead Ottawa, as if to say: "Do your worst."

"The She-wolf has yelped for the last time," growled the renegade.

In reply the avenger stretched forth her arm, and significantly touched the records of her vengeance.

"I know what them means," said Girty. "Yes! girl, you've done bloody work; now for the burning. The redskins have paid dearly for the deeds of that dark November night down the Maumee. I must go."

He bound the girl's feet and threw her across his shoulder as though she were a roe; then he gripped her rifle in the hand that held her from the ground, and stepped from the tragic spot.

A short distance up the stream he found a ford, and soon stood on the opposite bank.

To his questions and triumphant ejaculations, the girl never uttered a word, though the renegade rudely shook her as if he would break every bone in her body.

It was a proud hour for Joe Girty!

When from his covert he watched Jaguar-tail shoot the stag, he little dreamed of the rich prize so soon to fall within his grasp.

There was not an Indian among the tribes allied against Wayne, who would not have given his right hand for the young She-wolf.

And she was in their power.

CHAPTER II.

THE EMPTY NEST.

THE scene described in the foregoing chapter transpired on the left bank of the Maumee, almost directly opposite the mouth of the Little Turkey Creek, one of its insignificant tributaries, and between that stream and the present town of Napoleon, in Henry county, Ohio.

Joe Girty was obliged to cross the Maumee to reach the Ottawa village, which was situated near the river-bank, still nearer the site of the town just mentioned.

The evening of the Girl Avenger's capture was an auspicious one in the eye of the red-men of Northern Ohio. Mad Anthony Wayne, with the butchery of St. Clair's gallant troops fresh in his mind, had reached Greenville, and was preparing to punish the red nomads of the forests, for their bloody deeds.

The secret agents of Great Britain moved among the savages, and stirred them up to still more bitter hatred against the Americans. There were Capt. McKee, Elliot, Simon Girty, and other renegades equally as infamous, who whispered into the red-man's ears, until he threw back, with a bundle of arrows, into Wayne's teeth, the peace conditions his country had told him to offer.

On the night of the She wolf's capture, a hundred renowned warriors from each of the allied nations, had assembled at a grand council of war in the Ottawa village. There congregated Ottawas, Shawnees, Delawares, Miamis, Wyandots, Iowas and Chippewas.

To accommodate so large a throng, the council-house had been enlarged, and even then many could not force themselves beneath the birchen roof.

It was settled that Wayne was to be met with determined resistance, and the savages were sanguine of success.

British muskets had been freely distributed from Fort Miami by McKee and Elliot, whose faces, in the broad glare of the council-fires, glowed with triumph. It was mainly their work, for their bitter speeches carried the day when clear-minded chiefs advocated peace, without the needless effusion of blood.

Joe Girty reached the Ottawa town a short time after night-fall, and instead of making his way directly to the council house, he sought his own lodge, a substantial wooden structure that stood in the outer circle of wigwams. He had slightly altered his mind regarding the immediate disposition of Nanette Froisart—for such was the name of his fair young prisoner. Were he to bear her into the council, unannounced to the assembled braves, she might be torn from his arms by

the furious bands, and undergo a comparatively painless death. When, on the other hand, if he would leave her in his lodge, while he announced her capture, she would stand a fairer chance of being burned alive.

The last course he determined to pursue.

He reached his wigwam without being seen, for the women were congregated at the council-house, and hailing with loud acclamations the hot speeches of the younger braves.

The heavy door of the lodge was closed, and the renegade thundered a series of loud blows upon it with his coarse boot.

At length the portal yielded, and a hideous hag, about the renegade's own age, greeted his flashing eyes.

"Was ye asleep, ye old lynx?" cried Girty, almost crunching her shoulder in his giant fist. "No! ye was at the bottle, durn ye!" and he shook his Indian wife till her teeth chattered as though ague-stricken. "Now, mind ye; touch that bottle ag'in to-night, and Joe Girty 'll be a widderer 'ginst day, cursed if he won't. Where's 'Watha? At the council, hey! Good place for the white spawn! See here, old woman, I've brought ye the devil's progeny," and he held his little captive up before the squaw. "Ah, ye know who she is!" he cried with delight, as he noticed the flash of recognition that darted from the hag's bloodshot eyes. "Ha! we'll have a big burnin' spree, mebbe to-night yit. Now see hyar. Come, shake off that drunken fit, what's comin' on ye, fur ye've got to do guard duty fur a short time," he shook her again. "I'm going down to the council, an' tell the red devils I've catched the young She-wolf. Now ye've got to watch her till I come back, and, mind ye, Loosa, ef she tries to get away," and he glanced at Nanette, "send the contents of that pistol through her head. Do ye hear, old lynx?"

"The white Ottawa shall be obeyed," stammered the hag, glad to get rid of her brute of a master. "My eyes shall never sleep."

"They won't if ye hain't got too much whisky in ye," returned Girty, "an' afore I go I'll jest guard against that."

As he finished, he threw the captive to his mistress, and jerked a jug from one corner of the cabin.

It was uncorked, and weighing it on his broad palm, he remarked:

"Ye've taken a pretty ginteel swag, my red panther, and for fear you'll go to sleep while I'm gone, I'll dispose of the remainder."

With great gusto he elevated the vessel, and for several seconds it remained poised above his lips. He drank deeply—he drank the jug empty!

Then he drew a bunch of sinews from his pocket, drew them around Nanette's wrists, until the thongs cut into the flesh, and retied her ankles. The last operation accomplished to his inhuman satisfaction, he tossed his captive to a couch in one corner of the apartment. She fell upon her face on the one thickness of bear-skin, and lay motionless.

"Now watch her well," said the renegade, thrusting into the squaw's hands a silver-mounted cavalry pistol, a relic of St. Clair's ill-fated campaign. "If she's gone when we come for her, why, 'ooman, we'll cut ye to pieces. I'm a white devil, as you know, and by my sinful soul, if she gits away from you, I'll tear your lying tongue out."

With this he opened the door, and saw Loosa seat herself beside Nanette, with ready pistol, before he slammed the portal, and bounded toward the council.

There was a lull in the nocturnal proceedings when the renegade reached the outer circles of warriors.

Turkey-foot, the Shawnee, had just delivered a bitter speech, burdened with able warlike counsel, and the other chiefs were timid in following such a distinguished speaker immediately. It was in deference to Turkey-foot that the silence—an opportune moment for Joe Girty—reigned.

"Now's my time," he muttered, pushing his way through the circle. "I'll have every Injun yellin' within three minutes."

A moment later, he sprung into the glare of the six council-fires.

His presence, entirely unexpected at that hour—though none could divine the purport of his absence—was greeted with shouts, and some of the delegates whom he had known, in past and bloody days, sprung forward to welcome his return.

But he waved them back imperiously, and sprung to the large mat in the center of the structure, from which the

chiefs were wont to deliver their outbursts of Indian eloquence.

A murmur ran around the circle, and as the renegade glanced at Simon and the group of British emissaries to his left, he shouted :

“ Silence ! ”

Instantly every sound was hushed.

“ I come to gladden the hearts of the assembled chiefs with good news ! ” he continued. “ I am just from the banks of the Nomee,* where my hands closed upon the bitterest enemy the red-man possesses.”

Every head was shot forward to hear the name of the renegade's captive.

“ He's caught one of Mad Ant'ony's spies—perhaps Wells ? ” whispered Simon Girty to McKee. “ It'll be a jolly time for the red devils.”

“ I saw my captive send a bullet to the heart of Jaguar-tail,” continued Joe Girty, after a moment's pause. “ I saw her stoop to mark his bloody brow—and then—then she became mine.”

Simon Girty gripped McKee's arm, and threw a look of triumph into the agent's face.

“ Snakes ! he's caught *her*.”

“ Who ? ”

“ The young She-wolf.”

“ Impossible.”

“ Listen ! Joe's going to speak,” said Simon.

At that moment the younger renegade brother sent an electric thrill through every heart beneath the council-roof.

“ Yes, I caught *her*,” he yelled, “ *her*—the young She-wolf ! ”

Simon Girty bounded to his brother's side, while, with a pandemonium of yells, the savages were springing from their seats.

Tomahawks and knives flashed above the warriors' heads.

“ Where's the young She-wolf ? ” was the universal cry that assailed the renegade. “ We will tear her fangs from her head, and her yellow scalp shall dangle from an Indian's belt. Where lies the slayer whom the red-man has dreaded

* An Indian name for the Maumee.

so long? Show us to her, white Ottawa, that our knives may drink her blood."

"Calm the howling devils first, Simon," said Joe Girty. "We don't want the hull of them to cut the gal to pieces. When they come to their senses they'll burn her decently. Ye kin holler louder than I. Git up an' pacify the brutes, an' then I'll tell them where the gal is."

Simon Girty turned to do his brother's bidding, and at length silenced the Bedlamite uproar.

"She's in my lodge!" cried Joe Girty, "an' I want ye to act like men, an' don't go an' kill the gal so quickly that she won't know what hurt her. She's killed too many of my red brothers to die easily. Now set yer brains to work, an' see who can conjure up the right kind of torture."

Deliberation upon the death of their deadliest enemy—one who had entered their villages and shot their braves dead before their wigwams, whose dread presence had made the forests shunned places—was far from the minds of the Indians.

Turkey-foot, whose eldest son, a chief of promise, had fallen beneath the bullet of the Girl Avenger, sprung toward the renegade's lodge.

"Shall the braves think, while, perhaps, the She-wolf gnaws her bonds asunder?" he cried. "They who think are squaws; who act, men. Come! we will tear the heart from her body, and burn it over red coals. Turkey-foot's son wears her moon-mark; the father will slay the young She-wolf!"

Joe Girty tried to arrest the progress of the infuriated Shawnees. As well might he have tried to stem the overpowering avalanche.

Toward his lodge dashed the mad Indians, headed by the avenging father.

"We'll see the thing done, anyhow," cried the renegade, and away he darted with the avenging band.

It was common cause, for the bravest of each tribe had worn the She-wolf's fatal mark—a bloody crescent on the brow!

Scores of the warriors bore torches, which flashed a lurid light far in advance.

The door of the renegade's lodge stood open.

This was strange; he had closed it, and the wind could not hurl it wide.

By the side of Turkey-foot he crossed the threshold.

No voice greeted him, and the fire had gone out.

But the Shawnee's torch lit up the small apartment, and revealed the single occupant of which it boasted.

That occupant was the renegade's Indian wife, and the blood that oozed from a hole over her heart declared her dead!

The young She-wolf was gone!

Turkey-foot stared into Girty's face so thoroughly astounded as to be unable to utter a word.

Without the cabin, yells of rage and disappointment burst from the Indians' throats.

When the renegade recovered from his astonishment he rushed from the structure.

"I'll have her heart's blood for this if it takes me a lifetime!" he cried. "Where's 'Watha?" and his eyes wandered inquiringly around the throng. "Where's the White Fox? Kenowatha! Kenowatha!"

He shouted at the top of his voice; but no Kenowatha answered him.

Where was his adopted boy—his "pale spawn" as he, in his angry moments, was wont to call him?

CHAPTER III.

EFFIE ST. PIERRE.

NEAR the bank of the Maumee, and almost within rifle-shot of Fort Miami, stood the trading-post of Mitre St. Pierre. It had been erected by the speculating Frenchman, a decade prior to the opening of our story, and the old fellow had grown rich from the investment. Possessing the shrewdness and tact of his people, he gained the confidence of the savages, who patronized him to the dismay of other and rival posts along the river.

Mitre St. Pierre was near sixty years of age; but his eyes

flashed with the light of younger years. He possessed a massive frame, and his little head—entirely out of proportion to the rest of his body—seemed buried between broad shoulders, so entirely devoid of neck it was. He kept no assistance at the Post—commonly denominated “St. Pierre’s Den;” he did the work oftentimes of ten men in curing the skins the Indians exchanged with him for fire-water, and various other arduous duties.

His household consisted of his half-breed wife, and a protegee—the latter a young brunette, as beautiful as the wild flowers that kissed the limpid waters of the Maumee, and as gentle as the tame fawn that ate from her delicate hands. He did not keep secret the fact that she was not his child—he told her that, one day, he had found her in the forest not far from a settler’s cabin, pillaged by the Indians. All this, old St. Pierre would say, happened in Kentucky. How often would Effie wander down to the river, and there, seated among the flowers, wonder whose child she was, and whether the story the old trader had uttered so often, was true. She was happy in the trading-post, for her adopted parents—notwithstanding the disreputable names they bore beyond the stockade—treated her with kindness, and she never wanted for male companionship, for the handsome red-coated officers of his Majesty, stationed in Fort Miami, often found their way to the Post, and lingered long in her presence. They brought her books, which proved as dear friends to the Angel of the Maumee, as their uniformed donors.

A great rivalry existed between the officers, and at length the field was left to one who was considered Effie’s choice from the many.

Major Rudolph Runnion was a handsome man, but strongly addicted to the twin vices that beset the soldier doing dull garrison duty—drinking and gambling. Educated at Oxford, when quite young, he possessed a fine education, purchased a commission in the English army, and soon found himself assigned to garrison duty in America. His talents and manners were his passport to the friendship of Effie St. Pierre, and if the girl exhibited partiality for either of her suitors it was for the British major. She was ignorant of his vices,

and, whenever convenient, the old trader would speak to her in a tone that told her that he desired her, some day, to become the Briton's bride.

While the falling twilight beheld the scene enacted in the first chapter, Effie St. Pierre encountered a young Ottawa Indian before the Post.

She recognized the red boy who had borne many messages from the British fort to her forest home.

"Ha! the Angel of the Maumee walks in the evening," said the youthful Indian, pausing before the girl, and drawing a delicate *billet doux* from beneath his capote.

Effie St. Pierre glanced at the superscription, easily recognized as Major Runnion's.

“Effie—I am in trouble. Meet me ’neath the giant cotton-wood opposite the cove. I await you there. For the love of Heaven, fail not to come. RUDOLPH.”

Major Rudolph Rannion in trouble?

"Why does the white girl's eyes pierce Omatla?" asked the Indian boy. "Does she think that he has carried a fork-ed letter to her?"

"Where is the scarlet soldier?"

"Is he ill?"

"Yes."

"Omatla, has any thing unusual transpired at the fort to-day?" questioned Effie, determined not to leave the trading-post without caution.

"Now must Omatla's lips close," was the unexpected reply, "and he must go to the soldier and say that the Angel of the Maumee turns from him when the dark clouds gather."

"No! no!" cried Effie, springing forward and detaining the Indian, with the magic touch of her tapering fingers; "I will not desert him in his trouble, Omatla. He is the dearest friend I have in yonder fort, and he shall not call on me in vain. Tarry here until I run into the Post."

Nodding assent, the Indian remained stationary, and Effie hurried into the structure.

The secret of her interviews with the British major beneath the cottonwood, she had long since confided to her adopted parents, causing them the more to yearn for the match to which they thought the *eclaircissements* were leading.

"I'm going down to the cottonwood," she said, glancing at the old couple, as she threw a rich shawl over her head. "I won't be gone long, and you need not bar the gate till I return."

Then she stepped across the room, and drew from beneath the pillow of her couch a delicate silver-mounted pistol, lately received as a present from the major's hands. This she thrust into her bosom, drew the shawl tighter around her head, for the wind was blowing quite briskly without, and left the room.

Mitre St. Pierre and his half-breed wife exchanged mystified glances.

"What can the girl mean in taking the pistol?" questioned the trader, in his native tongue. "She never took it to her love-meetings before."

"Don't know," grunted the pale squaw; "must be going to shoot mark."

"Shoot at mark in the dark?" said St. Pierre. "If it were light, I'd think you right, old woman; but now something's up. Mebbe she's goin' to shoot the major? You know gals—at least they do in our country—take mighty strange notions sometimes."

The half-breed wife broke into a loud laugh, which she continued until Mitre's cheek assumed a scarlet hue, the sure precursor of a whirlwind of passion.

"Gal not shoot scarlet soldier," she said. "Gal love him; not shoot man she loves; Indian gal don't."

Old St. Pierre dropped the conversation, rose to his feet and deliberately took his rifle from the wall.

"Where goin'?" asked his wife.

"Fire-huntin'," was the response, and the speaker picked up a bundle of resinous sticks, prepared for the purpose, from one corner of the apartment.

"Who carry fire?" asked the half-breed, who seemed to divine the motives that prompted her husband's sudden activity.

"I'll carry it myself," gruffly responded St. Pierre.

Effie usually accompanied him on his fire hunts, and bore the torch. But now and then he would take it, while she dropped the noble prey.

"Let wife carry fire," said the woman, burning with a desire to follow her lord.

"That 'ud be a pretty caper," responded old Mitre, "fur all of us to go away and let the red thieves steal every thing we've got. Not another word out of ye, woman; I'm goin' alone, an' if I see your eyes in the woods, I'll put a bloody spot atween them."

Cowed by this threat the dusky wife relapsed into silence, and the trader walked from the Post.

"I'm goin' to see the endin' o' this love-talk," he muttered, as he hurried toward the river. "I've never listened to them yit; but I can't resist the temptation to listen now, for I tell ye somethin's in the wind, when a young gal goes out with a pistol to meet her lover."

The twilight had faded now, the goddess of night had crept up from the horizon, bathing the trysting-spot and adjacent stream in crystalline light.

Mitre St. Pierre crept down the river-bank, toward the giant cottonwood. The shadows that the great trees threw shielded him from observation. The cottonwood stood some distance from its neighbors.

"So you are here at last, *mon ami*. I feared that you would not obey my request."

There was an unwonted tone to the British major's voice, and his face wore a deathly pallor in the moonlight.

Effie St. Pierre noted all this before she spoke.

"Pardon me for mistrusting, as I did, the authenticity of Omatla's message," she said. "You spoke of being in trouble, which I could not credit, as you left me so good-spirited this afternoon."

"Ah, Effie, the clouds come sometimes when one thinks them far away—when the sky is one blue field from horizon to horizon. Trouble is oftentimes an unexpected as it is always an unwelcome guest.

"You really are in trouble, then?"

"Yes," and the major looked around to see if the dismissed messenger lingered near.

But Omatla was speeding toward his village

"To-day, girl—scarce two hours since—I had an altercation with Firman Campbell. You know him—the commandant's son. In the midst of his cups—inflamed with liquor—he drank a disrespectful toast to you, and I struck him."

Effie St. Pierre was silent—divining what was coming.

"He staggered under the blow," continued the Briton, "delivered with my open hand, and when he recovered he came at me with a pistol. It was self-defense, then, girl. I drew my weapon, and, to save my own life, took his."

A light cry of horror welled from Effie's throat.

"Oh, why did you kill him, Rudolph?" she cried. "He was but a boy—his father's favorite, and the pet of the garrison. You could not have disarmed him, and thus kept your hands cleansed of human blood?"

"The deed is done, now," said the major, "and the ball that nestles in his brain can not be recalled. Of course I was arrested and cast into the garrison guard-house, to await my trial. Notwithstanding the fact that I shot the stripling in self-defense, I will be condemned. I will be tried by partial jurors; I feel it; I know it. It is through bribery that I am here to-night. Effie—here to tell you that I love you."

The trader's *protege* started back at the word, and the criminal sprung forward and clutched her arm.

"Yes, yes, I love you, Effie St. Pierre, and I invite you to unite your fortunes with mine. I have a noble home in England. The Runnions are of noble lineage, and there, beyond the clutches of these avenging hounds, we'll enjoy the blessings that wealth affords. Come with me. Wayne is advancing up the valley. So sure as he lives he will defeat the allied tribes, and if I am caught here then he will deliver me over to the court-martial. In Canada, girl, I will be safe. I've strong relatives there, and from one of her ports the vessel will bear us to England. I'll not burden time with a long love-story, now. You know that I love you, and that is enough. Each succeeding moment is precious to me now. Come, Effie, fly with me to a gorgeous home, far beyond these woods, where man proves a famished wolf to his fellow-man."

"What! unite my young life to a murderer?" cried Effie. "Never! Rudolph Runnion, and, besides, I never *loved* you."

An oath parted the officer's lips.

"I did not come here to be baffled," he cried. "You shall become mine: you shall, I say!"

"Back!" cried the young girl, and the pistol—his gift—flashed from her bosom.

The Briton came to a sudden halt.

"Another step, Rudolph Runnion," cried Effie, with determination, "and the gallant boy you slew will be avenged."

"Better death here than in yon fort," hissed the criminal, as his hand flew forward and knocked the pistol from Effie's grasp. "I have you, now, girl, and before I leave this accursed spot I'll—"

The whip-like crack of a rifle rent the air; the major shrieked, reeled to the water's edge, grasped wildly at nothing, then disappeared among the waves that formed the famous rapids of the Maumee.

Effie St. Pierre, stunned by the fatal bullet, staggered and fell to the ground; but scarcely had she touched the earth when a figure dropped from the branches overhead, and raised her in his arms.

The figure wore the habiliments of an Ottawa chief

CHAPTER IV.

THE YOUNG SHE-WOLF AND KENOWATHA.

"LISTEN!"

"Kenowatha! Kenowatha!"

The call came full and clear from the Indian village.

"The White Ottawa calls Kenowatha."

"He may call till he is hoarse. Kenowatha, like the dead bird to its sorrowing mate, comes not."

"There! he has ceased calling; he is hunting for Kenowatha now."

"Let him hunt."

And for many minutes the twain stood on the river's bank, listening to the confused sounds that the night-wind bore from the Ottawa "town."

And while they—Nanette Froisart and Kenowatha—stand there, let us narrate the deeds that transpired between Joe Girty's exit from his lodge and his return with the vengeance-hunters of the allied tribes.

The first speech, delivered after the opening of the council, caused Girty's *protege* to turn in disgust from the assembly. He listened to that speech with the blood coursing through his veins like molten lava, and, as he turned away, he determined to carry out a project he had formed long before.

No longer would he dwell among the savages, though a sub-chief; no longer would he be called the son of one who had perhaps butchered his parents. He would that night fly the village; he would seek the advancing legions of Wayne, and avenge the kindred whom he believed to be dead. As far back as he could recollect his thoughts were associated with Joe Girty and his squaw wife, with the death-dance, war-path and forest chase. The renegade told him that his parents were dead, that he had snatched him, then a mere babe, from the hands of an Indian who was about to dash his brains out against a tree. At nine years of age, to all outward appearances, he became an Ottawa. His skin was

dyed with paint, he received the feathers of a young sub-chief, and an Indian name—Kenowatha, or the White Fox.

He had reached his seventeenth year now, was faultlessly formed, becoming of countenance, and instead of the black locks that crown the red-man's head, a wealth of auburn tresses, inclined to curl, touched his shoulders.

"No more will I live among those who strike against my people," murmured Kenowatha, in a determined tone, as he walked toward the rough cabin that had sheltered him for years. "This night sees me free, and ere long Mad Anthony will see the White Fox among his spies. Oh, that I could encounter Captain Wells in the forest! I will get my rifle. Loosa is asleep—full of his rum, and he is far away. Then—"

A footstep in that silent portion of the village broke his sentence, and a moment later, while he crouched upon the ground, the form of Joe Girty flitted past him.

There was no mistaking the burly figure of the renegade, and the young fugitive noticed the burden that the villain bore. He saw the white face that seemingly looked at him over Girty's shoulder.

The renegade did not perceive his adopted son, though he might have touched him with his outstretched hand, and Kenowatha immediately rose and glided after him.

Through a crevice in the cabin the white Indian witnessed the scene between the renegade and his wife, and resolved to free the beautiful terror of the red-men, though he lost his life in the action.

For many months he had roamed the forest, hoping to meet the young She-wolf—not to send a bullet to her heart and thus rid his tribe of their pest; but to unite his life with hers—to fly to the white settlements, forgetting the wildwood and its bloody scenes. But she had successfully eluded him, though at times he had reached the bodies of her victims, while the blood still flowed from the dreaded crescent mark.

But now they were to meet under truly thrilling circumstances.

Kenowatha waited until Joe Girty's steps died away toward the council-house, then he rose and entered the cabin.

Loosa started up with cocked pistol; but when she saw

who had entered she smiled, and pointed to Nanette Froisart, whose eyes were fixed upon the white Indian.

"Why did Kenowatha leave the council?" she asked.

"The big pain has entered his head," answered Kenowatha, ruefully, putting both hands to his head. "He will return to the council soon; but first he must rest. May he lie upon the couch beside the young She-wolf?"

"No!" thundered Loosa, who was just drunk enough to arouse the angry and suspicious part of her nature. "The White Fox would cut the She-wolf's bonds, and then the White Ottawa would tear Loosa's tongue from her head. Go back to the council!"

The mad squaw's quivering finger pointed to the half-open door; but instead of obeying the command, Kenowatha shot forward like a ball, and Loosa rolled upon the floor. Before she could recover, Kenowatha's knife severed Nanette Froisart's bonds, and with a cry of astonishment, at the unexpected action, the Girl Avenger bounded to her feet.

Kenowatha had thrown himself upon Loosa, whom of himself he could not conquer, for the frantic woman, sobered by her situation, possessed the strength of a tigress. Seeing this, the girl sprung to his assistance; but before she could lend any aid, the stalwart woman hurled the White Fox from her, and sprung erect.

It was a critical moment for the youthful twain.

Kenowatha glanced at the young She-wolf as he rose to his feet.

She stood against the door, armed with her scalping-knife, which she had snatched from the corner into which Joe Girty had tossed it.

With a cry of rage—summoned perhaps by the thought of the doom adjudged her should the girl escape—the renegade's squaw sprung upon Nanette. A dirk, similar to the formidable one Girty wore, glittered in her bony hand.

The girl met the mad onset calmly; her left arm skillfully warded off the blow that the mad squaw aimed at her, and her right hand, preceded by a glitter of steel, shot forward.

It was a deathful blow.

The dirk fell from Loosa's hands; she staggered back, and

Kenowatha, who had bounded to Nanette's aid, caught her and lowered to the ground his adopted mother, from whose hand he had received many a hard blow.

"Come!" he said to Nanette, in the Indian tongue, when they had equipped themselves with their own arms, "the white Ottawa is liable to return at any moment. Shali we go to the river?"

"Yes, to the low place," replied the Girl Avenger, "and then I'll guide you to my home."

Without another word they left the cabin, and in time crossed the river at the same ford over which Nanette had been borne as a doomed prisoner.

Immediately emerging from the stream, they heard the turmoil before Girty's cabin, and the loud voice of the renegade calling Kenowatha.

When the noise died away, Nanette's hand stole into Kenowatha's.

"Come and see the young She-wolf's den," she said, looking up into his face, and away they hurried through the forest, silent, and hand in hand.

They must have traveled rapidly for three hours, when the glitter of waters greeted their eyes. The silvery liquid sped lazily, a hundred feet below them, toward the Maumee.

The limestone banks were almost perpendicular, and with her fingers still entwined around Kenowatha's hand, Nanette began the descent. A misstep would send both to a dreadful death upon the rocky bed of the shallow stream far below, and the descent was extremely dangerous, for the rays of the moon but illy penetrated the branches of the overhanging trees, to show them the way.

Kenowatha trusted in the young She-wolf. He felt that she would guide him safely.

The twain reached a dark aperture that led into the cliff, and Nanette uttered a cry of delight.

"This is your home?" said Kenowatha, half interrogatively.

"My home and my citadel," responded the Girl Avenger, and a moment later she was leading Kenowatha through a series of gloomy, tortuous passages, in which one not accustomed to the place would be hopelessly lost.

At length the girl dropped the white Indian's hand, and presently a spark from two flints ignited a pile of bark-linings.

The fire revealed the avenger's home.

The apartment proved a large and almost square room, whose walls seemed to have been hewn to an even surface, by the hands of giants. The limestone floor was devoid of rubbish, and in one corner of the room lay a couch, several old muskets, camp-kettles, etc., while above them, on strong sinews, between thirty and forty Indian scalps were strung.

Kenowatha heard the bubbling of crystal waters, and tried to discover their whereabouts.

"If the White Fox is athirst," said Nanette, "let him drink from the spring that bubbles from the rocks yonder."

She pointed toward one corner of the subterranean apartment, and Kenowatha walked from the fire.

"I'll surprise the white girl now," he muttered, as he knelt before the spring, and scooped some of the water up in his hand.

Then he applied the clear liquid—strongly impregnated with lime, to his face, until he felt that the paint had yielded to the ablution.

With a smile upon his lips, he turned toward Nanette, who was cooking a piece of venison over the crimson blaze.

She did not notice his moccasined steps.

"Girl," he spoke, in the English tongue.

She looked up and sprung to her feet.

"A pale-face!"

"Yes, Kenowatha is a pale-face, though for many years he has been a red Ottawa."

Nanette took his hands.

"And they slew your loved ones, too?" she cried.

"Yes."

"Then we unite our fortunes!" she said: "side by side we will avenge the death of our loved ones. For every hair that crowned their heads a red-skin shall fall."

"Yes, yes," cried Kenowatha. "White girl, Kenowatha's life has grown into yours. He will hunt the red murderers with you, and the mark that he shall make upon their brows shall become as terrible as yours. Oh, our parents shall be

terribly avenged! God nerve me to the task!" and the youth's hand was lifted heavenward.

"I swear again, Kenowatha—let us swear together," and a minute later the cave resounded with the most terrible vow that was ever taken by the enemies of the red-man.

It was the oath of children orphaned by the tomahawk.

CHAPTER V.

ONE OF MAD ANTHONY'S SPIES.

MITRE ST. PIERRE reached the shade of the cottonwood in time to hear the story of the tragedy at the fort from Major Runnion's lips.

The old man was thunder-struck.

During the narration of the bloody deed he narrowly noted the manner of the speaker, clearly perceived in the bright moonlight, and he felt that the officer was grossly misrepresenting the affair. If he struck Firman Campbell, as he said, in self-defense, why should he fear the trial that was approaching? Ah! the old man feared it was an unprovoked murder, and, as the officer proceeded, the trader cocked his rifle as though he had divined the finale of the moonlight meeting.

Now, for the first time, he knew that Effie did not love the Briton, and then it rushed upon his mind that she had not forgotten one whom he had driven from his Post, telling him to remain away upon the pain of death.

Almost with bated breath, he watched the twain under the tree, and when Effie flashed the pistol into the major's face, an inaudible ejaculation of admiration welled from his heart.

"Shoot the white dog, Effie!" he murmured, now thoroughly disgusted at the conduct of one whom he had long respected. "Shoot him down, an' I'll carry him back to the fort an' say: 'Hyar's the dog that slew the lamb.' What!" when the weapon was knocked from Effie's hand. "This'll never do. I've a say in this muss, Ru' Runnion, an' hyar it goes."

The infuriated major had seized the young girl in his arms, and was hissing his devilish intentions in her ears, when the trader's gun struck his shoulder, and sent forth the ball with a result already witnessed by the reader.

Mitre St. Pierre had started from his concealment with a cry of horror, for he thought the bullet had accomplished a double work of death, when he saw a dark form drop from the branches of the cottonwood.

Mechanically he executed an abrupt halt, and crouched in the tall grass unperceived by the new-comer.

The Indian—for such the figure that dropped from the tree proclaimed itself—alighted beside the motionless form of Effie St. Pierre, which he quickly held in his arms, and was gazing down into her white face, with eyes aflame with triumph.

“It's Wacomet!” ejaculated Mitre, springing up from the grass, and bounding to the side of the brave.

“Chief—”

The trader's touch sent an electric thrill to the Indian's heart, and the brawny fellow, still holding Effie from the earth, turned upon him with an exclamation of astonishment.

St. Pierre held a clubbed rifle over his feather-protected head.

“Wacomet!”

“Mitre St. Pierre!”

The trader started back at the sound of that voice, and a light laugh broke from the speaker's lips.

“Ha! you thought me Wacomet,” he continued, in unbroken English. “Well, perhaps my dress does make me resemble that treacherous red-skin. I never thought of that when I painted up, and it's not too late to mend. You know it wouldn't do to have two Wacomets in the tribe at once.”

Mitre St. Pierre was silent; but the hate of a lifetime flashed from his dark eyes, and his frame shook with the passion of anger.

“I'm the last man you expected to meet to-night,” continued the disguised white, calmly glancing down upon Effie's face, with a mingled expression of love and pity. “I was an unwilling spectator to the meeting but lately concluded (

watched him narrowly, and, sir, before he should have harmed this fair girl, I would have sent a bullet to his brain."

In the silence that followed, the French trader found his tongue.

"Yes, you are the last devil I expected to see to-night," he hissed, taking a step forward; "and the sooner you leave this spot the better it will be for you, Mark Morgan. Here! give me the girl—my child—and seek your mad—your crazy General!"

"I am the disposer in this instance, St. Pierre," said the scout, with unruffled temper; "and I might as well tell you first as last that, when I leave this spot, the girl, Effie, goes along. I was following my legitimate business when I came here, and, sir, your arm, clothed as I know it to be with bone and sinew, is not strong enough to hinder my departure with whatever I choose to take away."

A bitter oath parted St. Pierre's lips.

"Mark Morgan—Wayne's accursed spy," he hissed, "not two months since I drove you from my Post, and warned you, for your own sake, to stay away. You have disregarded that warning; now I should inflict the penalty."

The ranger laughed, and with uplifted rifle the Frenchman darted forward.

Suddenly, but with gentleness, the scout permitted Effie to slide from his grasp, and St. Pierre's rifle met a tomahawk in mid-air.

The next moment, the weapon was wrenched from his grasp; he saw it describe a parabola over his head, and a dull plash told him that it had sunk in the waters of the Maumee.

While his hand, shaking with the rage that filled his heart, glided to his tomahawk, his eyes looked into the muzzle of a pistol, uncomfortably near his forehead.

"I do not mean to kill you, Mitre St. Pierre," said the spy; "but when you have listened to me, you will be at liberty to return to your Post."

The trader said nothing, but continued to glare upon the young vanquisher with the ferocity of a tiger.

"It is useless to tell you that I love your protégé," began the young man, "though perhaps the information that her hand has been promised me may be new to you."

An oath declared that the information was new to St. Pierre.

"Ere this, Wayne has marched from Greenville, to punish the red dwellers in these forests, and perhaps their white aiders and abettors. Sir, unless you change your tactics, the simoom of vengeance that is to sweep these parts will not leave a vestige of your Post. I'm speaking for your own good now. You have furnished the Indians with munitions of war to fight us, and, unless you soon swear fealty to Wayne, I say you'll reap the harvest of justice. It is for the safety of the girl that I remove her from you to-night."

"Safety!" sneered St. Pierre, pointing toward the British fort. "Those walls are strong, and then who seeks *her*? *He* is dead?"

"Yes; undoubtedly your bullet finished him," responded the young spy, glancing at the river; "but Effie has another lover—one who has sworn in secret and before his sub-chiefs to possess her. To-night he stands before the assembled tribes, spitting his venom at Wayne; to-morrow night he may burst in your doors and bear away, over your corpse, perhaps, the prize he covets."

A sneer escaped St. Pierre's lips.

"Ah! you may sneer when he is far away. You know him not as I do. I have heard him swear—in spite of the friendship his people bear you—to possess this fair girl—the woman whom I love—whom you have raised from childhood. This woman goes with me."

"Where would you take her?"

"To Greenville."

"Through the woods would you guide her alone?"

"Yes."

"The route is a death-trail now!"

"I have accomplished the journey already," replied Mark Morgan; "I know every dangerous spot betwixt this place and Greenville, and when Mad Anthony has chastised the Indians, I will bring the girl back."

"Why would the wolf return the lamb to the fold?"

"Perhaps she would want to see you, and have the ceremony performed at the Post, associated with many sweet memories, to her."

St. Pierre, his hand moving mechanically toward his knife. "Oh, if I had the weapons, Mark Morgan!" hissed St. Pierre, his hand moving mechanically toward his knife. "Oh, if I had the weapons, I'd stretch you dead upon this sod, and then I'd toss you to the fishes that swim in yonder stream. You have the advantage now; but you will not keep it long. You've made a devil out of me, Mark Morgan—the bitterest enemy the Americans can own. I return to my Post, seize my arms and join the allied tribes. In days long gone, I trod the war-path with Turkey-foot, Leather-lips, and such chiefs. I have not forgotten the lessons learned from them. This old frame still possesses the elasticity of youth; these eyes have not lost their penetrating powers; this mind still owns the subtlety that baffled the king of France, and when I bring all my powers to bear against you, sir spying dog, you have the same chances for escape that a wood-tick has under the grinding heel of an Indian.

"We'll meet again," St. Pierre continued, before the spy could utter a word, "and that girl," and he pointed to Effie, who had recovered and was clinging to her lover's arm, "and that girl," he repeated, "shall listen to the groans I shall wring from your heart, powerless to help you. I shall hunt you with a vindictiveness to which the work of the bitterest vendetta of the Old World can not be compared. Mark my words, Mark Morgan; take the girl and go."

As Mitre St. Pierre finished he stepped aside and waved his hand toward the slumbering river.

"Come, Effie," said the spy, taking the young girl's hand. "If it needed but an effort for your preservation to transform that man into a fiend, then it were best that his roof shelters you no longer."

St. Pierre scowled at this, and as the spy darted past with his pale flower, the sound of quick footsteps fell upon his ears.

"Mark, listen," whispered Effie.

"I hear them, girl," he said, without pausing. "They are British soldiers who have discovered the major's escape. They must not find me."

He sprung to the water's edge, where he suddenly paused, and, with a startling exclamation, gazed bewilderingly around.

"Where's my boat?"

The interrogative bubbled unsummoned to his lips.

His canoe was gone—gone from the tufts of grass to which he had securely moored it!

In his dilemma the spy turned toward the cottonwood.

He saw several British soldiers and Indians gain St. Pierre's side.

"There! there!" cried the trader, excitedly, pointing to the twain relieved against the silvery surface of the Maumee. "See! see! Mark Morgan, Wayne's accursed spy!"

With hideous yells, the Indians espied the brave scout, and darted forward.

A pistol flashed from Morgan's girdle, and before the foremost savage could throw himself to the earth, he sprung into the air with a bullet in his heart.

The following moment the scout sprung from the bank, and with Effie at his side was swimming toward the conical island covered with young cottonwood and poplar that lay a short distance below in mid-stream.

"Don't shoot!" shouted the trader, as his tomahawk knocked several directed guns from the Indians's hands. "You might hit the girl, an' she's mine. He will land on the Cone, and there, as certain as death! we'll bag our game."

The braves set up a shout at this, and the party on shore watched the twain in the water.

The "Cone," as the island was called, lay a short distance below the foot of the rapids, and in comparatively placid water. The scout had often visited it, and made himself acquainted with every foot of ground it contained. Its area embraced but eight acres, one-fourth of which composed a hollow, often irrigated by the Maumee.

At length Morgan's feet touched the bottom of the stream, and, holding Effie above the water, he waded to the Cone.

"Safe!" ejaculated the girl, as she looked up into the eyes of her lover.

"Not yet, Effie—look yonder!" and the spy's finger directed her to an unwelcome sight up the river.

The Indians were springing into the water, and swimming toward the island!

Effie turned to Mark with pallid cheek.

"I left my rifle here," he said, "and with it we'll keep the red-skins from landing."

It was evident that his last words were uttered to reassure the girl, when he believed the odds terribly against him.

He led her from the bank, and from the hollow of a decayed log drew a long-barreled rifle.

Bidding Effie remain in the shadow of some poplars, the spy stepped toward the water with ready weapon.

A second later a hand touched his arm.

"Ef—"

"Hist!" admonished the girl, with finger on lip.

"What?" he ventured to whisper.

"Some one's down in the hollow, Mark. I just heard a human voice. My God! can it be Indians?"

Mark Morgan uttered an ejaculation of horror. Were savages on the island, and others swiftly approaching?

It was a terrible moment!

CHAPTER VI.

AN UNEXPECTED SHOT.

"Yes, Mark, there's some one in the hollow."

This declaration, repeated the second time, aroused Mark Morgan.

He looked down the river, and beheld three feathered heads floating, as it were, on the moonlit water; and along the bank, to gain a point opposite the Cone, ran six or eight British soldiers, whose gilt buttons, and scarlet uniforms made them conspicuous marks for the ranger's rifle.

Missing St. Pierre from among them, the scout again glanced down-stream, and noted the long iron-gray hair of the older trader floating beside the heron feathers of an Ottawa chief.

As we have said, the situation of the pair was extremely critical.

Did they but possess a boat—the scout's canoe, which had mysteriously disappeared, as the reader has seen—they might hope for escape, for their enemies possessed no barks, and could not pursue.

In the moment of indecision, which had followed Effie's startling announcement, perhaps precious time had been lost, which Mark Morgan, inwardly cursing his inaction, resolved to regain.

Indians on the island—in the hollow!

"Back into the shade of this cottonwood, girl," cried the spy, drawing Effie from the bank. "Those voices in the hollow must be attended to. The red-skins seem to be making poor headway in the water, for which thank God! Here, stand behind this trunk; my rifle, take it, and drop the first red-man upon whom you can draw a bead. I've seen you shoot before, Effie. Be vigilant. I will return presently."

The brave girl smiled as she took the scout's rifle, and threw her gaze upon the heads on the water. He gripped her hand a moment, pressed it with fervor, as he looked down into her determined face, and glided away among the young poplars.

A few steps brought him to a spot that commanded a tolerable view of the hollow.

Once the river had flowed through the vale, thus forming two islets out of the Cone, and consequently, from frequent irrigations, but few representatives of the vegetable kingdom flourished there. But near the water's edge now grew a group of silver maples, and failing to see any living object in the almost denuded hollow, the spy bent his eyes upon this spot.

"Effie must have been mistaken," he murmured, as he was about to see the girl, convinced that they were the only occupants of the island. "I must haste to her, for she may need my assistance. I do not deem it necessary to reconnoiter yonder hill, for— Hist! by my soul! a groan."

The sound that fell upon the spy's ears came from the group of silver maples near the water, and as Morgan turned his eyes thitherward he beheld a momentary glitter among the white leaves.

"That groan was not feigned; it came from a person sorely wounded, and that person is a white man, for he said, 'Oh, my God!' An Indian never says that; he dies in silence; he never groans."

Satisfied that but one person, and that a wounded man, oc-

cupied the maple grove, the scout approached the grove and paused among the outer trees.

All was silent.

Then he crept forward with drawn knife.

On, on, still on, to the center of the maples, yet encountering no one!

"Could I have been deceived?" he asked himself, over and over. "I was willing to swear a minute since that I heard a groan in these maples; but now—"

"Christ, give me strength!"

Mark Morgan came to an abrupt halt. Scarce ten steps from him lay the speaker.

His gilt buttons scintillated in the rays of the new moon, and his scarlet uniform looked as pale as the face that the spy saw through the trees.

A moment served to bring Morgan to the man's side.

The wounded one looked up, and, with a groan of despair, shrunk from what he supposed an Indian.

"Major Runnion!" ejaculated the spy, recognizing the frightened face upturned to him.

"Yes, and you?"

"Mark Morgan."

"Wayne's spy?"

"Yes; but how came you here? My boat!" as his eyes fell upon the canoe, poorly moored to a maple root. "No, you need not speak. I can read all now. St. Pierre shot not to the death. You fell into the water, accidentally found my boat, and came hither."

"Yes—to die," groaned the major. "Hark! Oh, God, my foes, and yours too, are hounding us on to the dread end."

A fearful pallor overspread the Briton's face, as the report of a rifle smote the air.

"Courage!" cried Mark Morgan, stooping over the man—his enemy. "Lie perfectly still. I will return directly, and then we'll leave the island; we'll baffle them at last."

He sprung erect, and darted from the murderer, toward the spot where he had left Effie St. Pierre.

He had recognized the report of his rifle.

He found the brave girl driving a ball home with the calm-

ness of a brave man, and she smiled faintly as she looked up into his face.

"There's one Ottawa less, Mark," she said. "By stepping into the moonlight and displaying a directed rifle, I have kept the red-skins at bay in mid-stream, where they can touch ground; and until a moment since, they have been afraid to advance. Then one taunted his companions, said that the white girl's arms shook like leaves, and stepped forward. Ah! Mark, he'll never fight again. See! down-stream, the demons look like buoys."

"Come girl, we leave the island."

"What, Mark, a boat?"

"My boat, Effie. Ha! look yonder! They're going to flank us."

He pointed up the river to a spot from whence a number of British soldiers were springing into the water, to act in concert with St. Pierre and their red allies, by flanking the island.

Instantly Effie turned the spy's rifle upon the scarlet coats.

"No, Effie, they're the king's soldiers," said Mark, gently taking possession of the weapon. "We're not at war with England, and the death of a Briton by our hands might be mourned by a thousand homes. Come, we'll defeat them yet."

He caught her hand and darted from the spot, almost directly in the faces of the British, some of whom were in mid-stream above the Cone.

A few minutes sufficed to bring them to the wounded Briton, and the spy's boat.

"Major Runnion!"

The exclamation bubbled involuntarily to Effie's lips.

The major groaned, and turned his face from the girl he had grossly insulted—deeply wronged.

"Perhaps it would serve you right to leave you here," said Mark Morgan, looking down upon the major. "You're a murderer, and deserve the gallows; but, I'm not the man to leave a fellow-creature to die without a chance for his life. Were they to find you here, they'd kill you without a moment's prayer, and I doubt you're not prepared to settle with

the powers above. We'll take you with us, and if you recover, which, to be plain, I think doubtful, I'll turn you over to Mad Anthony, and you can guess what he'll do with you."

"Take me with you," groaned Runnion. "Do not let me fall into their hands. When I recover I'll meet them, and fight them fair."

Glancing at Effie, the spy raised the British soldier in his arms, and laid him in the bottom of the boat.

The Briton smiled his gratitude.

"Get in, girl."

Effie St. Pierre sprung into the bark, and the scout followed.

"Now for the gantlet!" he said, as he seized the paddle.

The boat shot from the shore; a yell burst from the redskins below, which was quickly answered by the British above. Effie gripped the scout's trusty rifle.

A few strokes sent them around the southern point of the island, and the canoe burst upon the vision of the Britons.

A cry of astonishment greeted the daring voyagers.

Mark Morgan guided the boat toward the right bank of the stream, and, as if to aid them, clouds flitted before the bright disk of the moon.

"Shoot them! shoot them!" shouted a stentorian voice from the bank.

The soldiers in mid-stream threw to their shoulders the rifles which they had kept above their heads, and half a dozen flashes greeted the occupants of the canoe. The balls flew over their heads, and struck the spongy cottonwoods that clothed the bank, with dull thuds.

The spy laughed as the bullets whistled over them, and glancing up at the clouds, gradually passing before the queen of night, drove his boat swifter through the placid water, and soon they were out of range—for the moment were safe.

Then Mark Morgan lessened his speed, and bade Effie take the paddle.

"I must play surgeon awhile," he said, turning to the major, who, during the flight had laid motionless in the bottom of the boat. "Major, we've run the gantlet safely.

Your countrymen, I fear, are sorry marksmen. There ! don't speak. I see it irritates your wound."

The next moment the spy had removed the bloody clothing from the Briton's wound, which he, with some knowledge of surgery, proceeded to examine.

He discovered that the half-ounce ball of the trader's rifle had torn through the soldier's right side, inflicting one of the ghastliest wounds the young spy had ever seen. The loss of blood had been very great, and now with that and the Herculean task of working the spy's canoe from its moorings to the Cone, the Briton was as weak as a child.

"Your wound has stopped bleeding," said Mark, looking into Runnion's face, "and I must say that your case looks bilious. I can't do much for you now ; but when we get to a hiding-place, I'll do the best I know how with you."

Then Mark proceeded to place a pillow formed from his blanket, under the soldier's head, and in other little ways tried to make him comfortable.

"I know a place where we can hide to-day," said Mark, gliding to Effie's side. "It is now far into the night, girl, and, thank fortune, before the dawn we shall reach the spot."

He looked the savage he impersonated, while he sat at Effie's side, and conversed with her in low whispers. The long heron plumes fluttered over his shoulders ; he had the keen eye of the Ottawa, and his body was covered with glittering war-paint.

When the sky, at length, began to grow lighter in the east, the canoe increased its speed, under Morgan's strong strokes, and when the dawn had fairly come the spy guided his little craft up a narrow stream walled by perpendicular rocks.

"There's a cave not far from here, Effie," he said, as the boat shot along, now and then grating upon rocks which proclaimed the shallowness of the stream they were navigating.

"Now that we are safe, Mark, I hope Wayne—"

The sentence was broken by the crack of a rifle overhead, the paddle fell from Mark Morgan's hands, and he sunk down in the bottom of the boat.

With a light cry Effie St. Pierre snatched up the rifle that lay at her feet, and glanced upward.

Two figures on a projecting rock fifty feet above, commanded her attention.

"Throw down the rifle, girl," said the silvery voice that floated down to her, while the boat spun around among the rocks.

The two figures began to descend.

"Hasten!" cried Effie, laying the rifle aside, and glancing at the bloody face of her lover. "He's not an Indian," and she pointed to him as she looked up again. "The young She-wolf has stained her hands with the blood of a friend!"

At this a cry escaped the lips of the foremost of the descending twain, and faster down the rocks came the beautiful Terror of the Maumee, and Kenowatha.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RED-SKIN'S OATH.

MADDENED beyond description, because his call was unanswered by his protégé, Joe Girty turned to the Indians, and allowed a volley of oaths to escape his lips. Finding his red allies mute, or conversing with each other in unintelligible whispers, he stepped from Turkey-foot's side to the little group of renegades consisting of his brother Simon, Capt. McKee, Elliott, and several others.

"Joe, it's as plain as day to me," said Simon Girty.

"Then out with it."

"The girl an' Kenowatha, as you call your pale spawn, are together."

The next moment the white Ottawa had bounded into the cabin, tenanted by the dead.

Turkey-foot followed him.

The torches of the twain revealed the ghastly sight again, and Girty suddenly turned to the chief.

"Simon must have told the truth," he said; "the white spawn's gun is gone."

"And he is with the young She-wolf," hissed Turkey-foot. "Now shall he become the red-man's enemy. The white Ottawa will help us hunt him?"

"Yes, yes," cried Joe Girty, grasping the outstretched hand of the chief; but a moment later his cheek blanched to an icy pallor, in the glare of the torches.

He thought of the deadly bullets that sped from the She-wolf's rifle.

Turkey-foot divined the meaning of the renegade's terror.

"Men who fear squaws should wear long hair and tear their sinews from their arms," hissed the Indian, in a tone of cutting derision. "To-morrow night a league that shall hunt Kenowatha and the She-wolf to the cold waters of the dark river, forms in Turkey-foot's lodge. Turkey-foot had a boy once—a gracious son; but the mark of the She-wolf's teeth is on his skull. Until this moment, warriors have refused to take the oath a childless father would impose upon them. Now the time has come. Turkey-foot met the young chiefs last night. Leather-lips, Wacomat, Segastaro, and others yearn for the red oath. Ah, the Manitou's cheeks will become as white as my brother's, when the red-man's words enter his soul. If the white Ottawa can chase the snow from his cheeks, let him enter Turkey-foot's wigwam when another sleep shuts the eyes of the women."

"I will be there," cried the renegade, with a mighty effort, appearing calm. "These fingers itch to clutch the White Fox's throat, my knife shall blush beneath his heart's blood. You may have the She-wolf;—she's killed enough Ottawas to entitle her to a thousand deaths; but I want the boy—recollect that."

"If the white Ottawa joins us he shall have the boy," said Turkey-foot. "*We* want the She-wolf's heart."

Girty's eagerness to step upon the trail of the youth whom he now hated with all his heart, made him impatient.

"Why not to-night?" he said.

"The white Indian can step before the young She-wolf's bullet," said the chief, sarcastically, as he stepped aside and waved his red hand toward the door. "But Turkey foot waits until the oath has been taken."

The renegade remained in his tracks.

As well might he discharge his pistol against his own temple, as to attempt to hunt down Kenowatha and his avenging companion alone. While Turkey-foot spoke, his mind flitted

back upon the history of the past, covered by one short year. He could count twenty chiefs whose brows had worn the fatal crescent of the She-wolf. Before the council fires impetuous chiefs had sworn to hunt the Girl Avenger down; for that purpose had they left the village, and awhile later a hunter would find them in the forest, scalped and wearing the red crescent. Well might Joe Girty tremble, for Nanette's rifle had once been aimed at him, and nothing but an accident—the stumbling over a hidden root—had saved his life.

“In union there is strength.”

Thus the renegade thought, and he felt that success would attend the league about to be formed.

Turkey-foot laughed when he saw the renegade shrink from the task of hunting the young She-wolf alone.

“Come!” said the Indian, stepping toward the door, “the braves are returning to the council-house. Do not forget Turkey-foot's lodge—when sleep shuts the women's eyes.”

“I will not forget,” said the renegade, and the following moment, the twain were returning to the council-house.

The braves were not surprised at the inaction that followed the escape of the Terror of the Maumee. By many she was believed to be in league with Watchemenetoc, the Evil Spirit, and the bravest shuddered when they thought of following her into the gloomy recesses of the forests.

Presently, as though it had suffered no interruption, the council was resumed, and again the bitterest of Indian invectives were showered upon Wayne, who then watched the building of Fort Defiance.

Joe Girty joined his brother renegades upon the mats within the circle, and with thoughts far from the tempest that was soon to devastate the lovely Maumee valley, he heard the outbursts of Indian eloquence, that frightened the birds from their frail homes, upon the wooded banks of the shimmering stream.

He owned one desire now, and that was to drive a knife into the heart of the boy whom he had snatched from an Indian's tomahawk, and created a red chief.

The council at last broke up amid the infernal yells that followed Blue Jacket's peroration.

The objects of the British and renegades were accomplished. All overtures of peace on the part of the Americans were use

less now; every warrior of the allied nations had sworn to resist Wayne to the last, and die upon the hunting-grounds of their fathers.

"Remember!" whispered Turkey-foot, in Girty's ear, as he glided past the renegade. "The bloody words when another sleep comes. The She-wolf must die before we meet the mad white chief."

"Now or never!" was the response, for Girty knew the man who was leading his soldiers from the southern posts.

The Indians now had no Harmar or St. Clair to deal with!

Nothing of note connected with our romance occurred in the Ottawa village during the day that followed, and when, to all appearance, the red people slept again, the renegade stole from his cabin and walked toward the river.

Now and then he passed a wigwam from which voices reached his ears, and once or twice, through curiosity, for his business was not urgent, he paused and caught the words of the red conversationalist. Everywhere but one subject was the topic under discussion—the approach of Wayne, and the probable issue of the campaign.

Beside one lodge he paused longer than usual, and would allow himself no rest until he had obtained a view of the talkers.

One was Vulture-eyes, an experienced Wea chief, and a representative from his nation to the general council; his companion, an agile youth, clad in the habiliments of an Ottawa sub-chief. The latter was a stranger to Girty, who knew every man in the Ottawa nation, could distinguish each in the dark by his voice, and it is not surprising that the young Ottawa fell under the renegade's suspicion. Vulture-eyes, whose orbs danced under the influence of the pale-face's fire-water, was exceedingly communicative, and Joe Girty listened with rising indignation, while he divulged the number of the allied warriors, the plans and dispositions of the forces to the suspected one, who, according to his narrative, had returned from a tedious scout too late to participate in the council.

The longer the renegade looked at the young Ottawa, the deeper grew his suspicions, until they were reduced almost to

a certainty. And when he glided from his hiding-place, he felt that a white skin lay beneath the war-paint that glistened on the body of Vulture-eyes' companion.

He did not walk far, however, until he halted before a white birchen lodge, and at the sound of his voice two young braves awakened from light slumber.

Their features proclaimed them what they really were—twins.

"Do the Twin Panthers know where Vulture-eyes, the Wea, rests?"

"We do."

"Watch the Wea and the one with whom he talks," responded the renegade, "and when that one leaves the Wea's lodge, seize him without noise, bind him, bring him to the Panther's nest, an' watch him until I return. On no account make any noise that will rouse the warriors, for, in the trouble, the one who talks with Vulture-eyes may escape. To the White Whirlwind* he is worth a thousand rifles."

The brothers' eyes flashed at the last sentence, and, true to the Indian character, without a question, they glided away in the starlight.

A low and triumphant chuckle came from the renegade's heart as he turned to his mission again, and his lips parted in low speech:

"To-morrow Mad Anthony will have one thunderbolt less, fur ef I hev'n't seen through that young fellar's paint an' stuff, then ye kin put Joe Girty down fur an old blind fool. Yes'r, thet chap what's tappin' Vulture Eyes, the drunken old Wea, ar' one ov Wayne's spies, an' ef his friends 'u'd call 'im Mark Morgan he'd answer to the handle. Ha! ha! ha! a fox can enter the roost a thousand times without gettin' his foot in the trap; but at last his time comes."

Presently the renegade reached the end of his nocturnal journey—Turkey-foot's lodge, the nearest construction of the kind to the river.

He heard a confused murmur of voices before he entered the structure, and when he crossed the threshold, he found that he was a trifle late. His appearance was greeted with grunts of satisfaction, not unmingled with surprise, and Girty

* A name bestowed by the savages upon Wayne.

was not prepared to recognize the formidable chiefs whom Turkey-foot had seemingly enlisted in his revengeful enterprise.

Foremost among them towered the giant leader of the league, Turkey-foot, who now was animated with a truly diabolical project to avenge the death of his son. Then came Leather-lips, the famous sorcerer of the Wyandots, than whom a more cunning and revengeful Indian never played the prophet; then Wacomet, Effie St. Pierre's red lover, tall and, for an Indian, extremely handsome, somewhat of a dandy among the belles and beaux of the forest, but a tornado in battle, a lynx on the trail.

Besides the three already described, as many more noted red-men completed the league, into which but a single pale-face was to be admitted.

When Girty entered Turkey-foot's lodge, he found its tenants grouped around a large, flat stone, placed on the earth in the lodge's center. On this stone lay a piece of tanned deer-skin, upon which Stomah, one of the league, and quite an untaught artist, was tracing the totems of the chiefs. In silence the totems were completed, and the voice of Turkey-foot greeted the assembly.

"We are here to take the oath that makes the Manitou shudder. Let those who will not swear walk into the light of his fires."

Not a figure stirred.

"By his totem, and the heart of the Manitou, shall each swear, and beneath our totems shall we write our marks in the warm blood that gushes from our hearts!"

At the significance of the terrible vow, every heart grew chill, and presently Turkey-foot drew his scalping-knife from its highly-ornamented sheath.

"Turkey-foot will swear first," he said, bringing the point of the knife to his bare red breast; "and when we all have sworn, then shall each drink the blood that shoots from the wounds we make, even as we shall swallow the heart-gore of the young She-wolf."

A moment later, the knife glided through the skin directly over the chief's heart, and the smoking blood gushed forth like a tiny rivulet, suddenly released from the power of a dam.

"Now!"

The Indian bathed his hand in the red tide, and threw the gory member toward heaven.

"Oh! Kai Ja Manitou—"

The crack of a rifle out in the starlight, unaccompanied by the wolfish warning that had preceded so many shots fatal to the red-men of northern Ohio, interrupted the oath, and Stomah, the red artist, with a gurgle and a groan, sunk to the earth; and his blood gushed over the totems—the last work of his hands.

The fatal shot seemed to glue the Death League to the bloody spot, and each found himself staring at the gory form, and almost obliterated totems!"

The slayer, whom prompt action might have thrown into their hands, was flying to her rocky fastness. For all recognized the crack of the death-dealing rifle, and knew that already the young She-wolf was upon the track of the Death League.

Turkey-foot was the first to speak. Though horror-stricken at Stomah's sudden taking off, he was not terrified. Instead of fear, unwonted bravery and revenge were written upon every lineament of his swarthy face.

His voice roused his companions from their horror.

"Another shall fill his place!" he said, calmly, pointing to the stricken chief. "So fast as one falls beneath the She-wolf's rifle—if others do fall—his place shall be filled. The League shall always contain seven avengers."

A shout greeted this brief speech, and stooping over Stomah Turkey-foot made an incision over the pulseless heart large enough to admit the hand of a man.

"Here's blood enough for oaths that will outnumber the Great Spirit's fires," he cried, thrusting his right hand into the wound, and bathing it in the gore that surrounded the dead chief's heart.

"Follow Turkey-foot!" he cried, withdrawing his hand, and sweeping the circle with the bloody member.

The command was obeyed. Joe Girty's hand, with human blood, was made as red as those of the Indians, and then, with the gory members raised to heaven, while the red current trickled down their arms, they swore to bathe their hands in

and drink the heart's-blood of Nanette Froisart, the Beautiful Terror of the Maumee, and Kenowatha. Joe Girty swore more particularly regarding the latter.

It was, in every sense of the word, a terrible oath !

"We will not follow her just now," said Turkey-foot. "She is far away. But we know where her den is—along the stream with high walls. We will track the young She-wolf there, and then—doing what no brave until this hour dared *think* of—we'll enter her den, and drink her blood. And we'll meet the White Whirlwind with her yellow scalp-locks in our belt."

This determination met with shouts of approval, and a few minutes later the members of the League separated.

No turmoil following the death-shot by Indians without Turkey-foot's lodge, it passed unnoticed.

Joe Girty hurried toward the lodge of the Twin Panthers. It was empty !

"The spy is determined to pump Vulture-eyes dry," he murmured, turning on his heel ; "I'll help them catch 'im."

A few moments later, he saw in the bright starlight, one Indian struggling with two others, before Vulture-eyes' lodge.

He bounded forward, with a glittering blade in his blood-stained hand.

As he reached the struggling trio, he heard the dull thud of a knife against a bone, and one of the three staggered back with a half-smothered groan.

Then the slayer hurled his other antagonist from him and darted away.

But the renegade's hand shot forward like a butcher's sledge, and the victim staggered and fell to the earth.

"'Tis lucky I war hyar," said Girty, in his rough voice, as he threw himself upon the stricken one. "I guess I war not mistaken ; but I'll see."

With spittle he rubbed some paint from his prisoner's face, and the stars showed him a white skin.

"I war right !" he ejaculated, rising and uttering a peculiar whoop. "Wayne'll hear what you pumped out o' old Vulture-eyes, Mark Morgan. Never !"

CHAPTER VIII.

OFF FOR THE RESCUE.

THE shot fired at Mark Morgan by the Girl Avenger did not prove fatal, as the reader has just seen by witnessing the scout's capture by Joe Girty in the Ottawa village.

In his admirable disguise, the spy counterfeited the Indian to perfectness, and under the circumstances it is not at all surprising that the dreaded enemy of the whole red race should try to send him to "the valley of the shadow." But a few moments before the boat and its occupant appeared in the almost fatal vicinity, Kenowatha and the young She-wolf emerged from the latter's home among the rocks, and stood upon the limestone crags many feet above the stream.

Kenowatha was the first to see the boat, and when Nanette's eyes fell upon it—when they encountered the spy whom she believed to be one of her sworn enemies, a whirlwind of passion shook her frame, and she snatched the White Fox's rifle from his hands—hers having been left in the cave.

Before she sped the leaden bullet on its errand, Nanette recognized Effie St. Pierre and Major Runnion, both of whom she had seen beneath the very cottonwood where the reader has seen a startling drama enacted.

Almost instantly she arrived at these conclusions: that Mark Morgan was Wacomé the Ottawa, who, she knew, entertained a burning passion for the trader's daughter or *protege*, as she really was, for in his disguise the young spy certainly bore a striking resemblance, especially from the girl's standpoint of observation, to the red-skinned lover; that, intent upon possessing the girl, who had gently yet firmly repelled his advances, Wacomé had journeyed to the trading-post, and had surprised Effie and her British lover under the cottonwood; that he had captured both, and was conveying them to some point up the stream, where he might hide them from their friends and his.

If such were the case, it had been policy for the young She-wolf to follow Wacomé, and by strategy wrest his pris-

oners from his red hands, and hideously adorn his brow with her crimson mark.

But Nanette Froisart could not repel the passion that took possession of her, and the rifle cracked.

When Effie St. Pierre shouted to her as she and Kenowatha descended the rocks, that her bleeding victim was no Indian—that she had dyed her hands in the blood of a friend, Nanette was horror-stricken, plunged into the stream, and arrested the crazy motions of the rudderless boat.

“What! not an Indian?” cried Nanette, looking up into Effie’s pale face.

“His skin is as fair as yours. He is Mark Morgan, one of Wayne’s spies.”

“Impossible!” parted the avenger’s lips.

“I speak the truth,” returned Effie. “See!” and she displayed white skin by washing the blood from her lover’s cheek.

A cry of astonishment simultaneously parted the two mute spectators’ lips.

“He is not dead!” suddenly cried Kenowatha, who had noted a twitching of the scout’s pale lips. “See! girl, your ball did not enter his head; it merely grazed it.”

The speaker caught up some water in his hand, and soon displayed the truth of his assertion.

A cry of joy welled from Effie’s heart, and she knelt over her lover, taking his hands.

Additional water sufficed to unclothe Mark Morgan’s eyes, and presently he sat up in the boat.

“It was a close shave, girl, he said, looking at the avenger, whom he now encountered for the first time. “I owe the preservation of my life to the fact that you fired downward; had I been on a level with you there were no need of my talking now.”

“No,” answered the She-wolf. “I would have sworn that you were an Indian—Wacomét.”

“You are not the first person who has recognized Wacomét in me within the last twenty-four hours, and I had better counterfeit another red gentleman than he. But, girl, we must seek shelter; there may be sharp eyes nearing us, and then here’s one who needs rest, to live.”

As he finished, the spy glanced at the Briton, and a minute later the boat was moored to the bank.

It was no child's play for the quartette, though Effie could lend but little assistance, to bear the helpless major up the loose and ragged rocks to Nanette's cave home. But the Herculean task was bravely undertaken and accomplished, and the wounded man found himself almost buried in a pile of soft skins, that seemed to him a bed of down.

Then his wounds were more carefully examined, and found to be of a less serious nature than was at first supposed; but still he was far from safety. The irritation caused by the journey up the rocks might speedily prove fatal, and terminate a life not without guilt.

The day passed quickly to the inmates of the cave, and when night came again, Mark Morgan announced his intention of carrying out the wishes of his commander before dawn—viz: to enter the Indian village and ascertain the numbers, etc., of the red-men and their white allies who were to meet Wayne on the banks of the Maumee. He knew almost to a certainty that the conflict would take place near Nanette's cave, and he resolved to leave Effie under the protection of the young avenger, until he returned from the American forces. She would be safer there than while being conducted through forests, swarming with red and white foes.

The young spy now doffed the dress peculiar to Wacomet, which he had worn, and adopted that of an Ottawa sub-chief, in which he would be more likely to carry out his plans satisfactorily, both to himself and Mad Anthony.

Nanette resolved to accompany the scout to the suburbs of the "town," and there await his return, leaving Effie and the Briton under the watchful eye of Kenowatha.

While the boy—for boy Kenowatha may well be called—inwardly chafed at being left to play an inactive part in the red drama that was being enacted, he submitted with good grace when Nanette told him that soon he should tread with her the path of vengeance, from dawn till dawn.

Disguised as an Indian girl, yet bearing her rifle, the young She-wolf—as the Girl Avenger had been styled by the savages—left the cave with the scout, and, after a rapid walk of two

hours, parted with him on the suburbs of the Ottawa village, he promising to return against midnight.

The girl had chosen a position a short distance from the river, and within thirty feet of Turkey-foot's lodge, the entrance of which she faced.

The curtains of skins that formed the door were raised, thus exposing the well-lighted interior of the spacious wigwam to the girl. Presently six dark figures, gliding as noiseless as serpents over the meadow, passed Nanette and entered the lodge.

After awhile a solitary figure, which she recognized as Joe Girty, approached and walked among the warriors. Then followed the drawing of the totems, and when the face of Stomah, the red artist, was revealed to the avenger, her rifle flew to her shoulder, and, before the gust of revenge left the girl, Stomah was ebbing out his life-blood, as the reader has seen, over the totems. Stomah had paid the penalty he had incurred upon a certain stormy November night, years prior to the inauguration of our romance.

After the fatal shot, the avenger crept nearer the bank of the stream and noiselessly reloaded her rifle. Then gliding back she listened to the oath of the Death League, and saw its members leave the Ottawa's lodge.

She knew that she would not be followed that night, for Turkey-foot had said as much, and suddenly, while she waited for the spy's return, Joe Girty's whoop, indicating an important capture, rent the air.

The cry seemed to have alarmed the entire village, for the lodges near her poured forth their human contents, that hurried toward the center of the "town." With almost throbless heart, and rifle at half-cock, the disguised avenger darted forward with natural caution, and presently her worst fears were confirmed.

A multitude of torches illuminated a large space, that might be termed a well-defined square, and around one man, secure in the grip of the renegade, howled fully four hundred mad representatives of six red nations.

Eager to witness what would follow, and confident of the trustworthiness of her disguise, the Indian's enemy placed her gun against a wigwam and boldly joined the assembly.

In a few words Girty described the spy's capture, and calmly Mark Morgan awaited his doom.

"To the stake at once!" cried the loud voice of Wacomet, who saw in the young scout the accepted lover of the girl he admired. "At once to the tree! and we'll send the white dog's ashes to his master."

This was greeted with shouts of approval, which still echoed down the Maumee, when a pale-face sprung from the crowd and paused before the prisoner.

It was Mitre St. Pierre!

"Mark Morgan," he shrieked, with flashing eyes, as his bony fingers closed on the spy's throat, "where's my gal? Tell me where she is this minute, or, by the God that created us I'll scatter your brains over these braves."

"Ye've axed the chap a question which he can't answer while you continner to choke his wind off," said Girty, clutching the exasperated trader's arm. "Take yer fingers away, an' we'll see what he sez to yer question."

Sullenly the Frenchman complied, for he saw Girty's hand touch the ornamented hilt of a huge Spanish dirk that glistened in his gridle.

"Now answer my question, white dog!" he cried, stepping a pace from the prisoner, who eyed him with something of a look of triumph mingled with defiance. "Where's Effie—my gal!"

"Where I left her, Mitre St. Pierre!"

The scout's answer drove a yell of rage from the trader's throat; he shot forward, and before Joe Girty could interpose his hand, again griped Mark's throat, and a pistol-barrel glittered in the starlight.

There was murder in St. Pierre's eyes.

To prevent the deed, several braves and Simon Girty darted forward; but their assistance was not needed for the White Ottawa had knocked the weapon from the Frenchman's hand, and hurled its frenzied owner to the earth. And when he rose again, looks told him that his personal safety depended on quietude.

"Now what shall we do with the spy?" demanded Joe Girty.

A majority of the Indians cried aloud for immediate exe

cution by the terrible ordeal of fire; but the whites, exclusive of Joe Girty, overruled them.

"Wait until the braves return with May and M'Lellan," said Captain McKee, addressing the savages. "Our men are sure to catch the two spies who were prowling around Fort Miami, and when they return we'll burn all together."

This speech was seconded by Simon Girty, Elliott and others, and Nanette saw the spy dragged to a strong log cabin in the center of the village, there to await the capture of May and M'Lellan, two brother scouts, upon whose trail a band of savages had been for several days, and whose capture, by the sanguine enemies of Wayne, was regarded certain.

The crowd that accompanied Mark Morgan to the prison was immense, and the cries that soared starward proclaimed the true wishes of the Indians.

"I'll wring her whereabouts from you yet," Nanette heard Mitre St. Pierre howl, "and if you give me any more such answers as you did awhile ago I'll tear your heart out and cram it into your mouth."

The spy said nothing, but smiled faintly at the Frenchman, which exasperated him the more.

All at once Nanette began to force herself through the crowd toward the scout, and at last she found herself at his side.

"To-morrow night!" she whispered in his ears, while the crowd greeted an outburst of anger from St. Pierre with hideous cries. "We'll come for you then—Kenowatha and I. They won't catch May and M'Lellan."

He did not betray the avenger's presence, and when the door closed on him, and a triple guard was thrown around the cabin, the young She-wolf hurried toward her home in the rocks, which she reached an hour or more before dawn.

After telling Effie that her lover was on his journey to Wayne—for she did not wish to inform the girl of the scout's peril, she drew Kenowatha aside and communicated the true state of affairs.

"I told him that we would come to-morrow night," she said.

"We will come!" cried Kenowatha, eager for action.

"We will enter the village, and if any red-men cross our paths we'll mark them to the terror of their brothers. Kai Ja Manitou shall look down upon a new mark—soon to be as terrible as the bloody half-moon. I have chosen my mark, Nanette—a cross!"

"Oh, may the cross become as terrible as the crescent!" said Nanette.

"It shall! it shall!" and Kenowatha's hand stole to Nanette's, and then they returned to the fire.

When another day had faded, the two avengers glided from the cavern, by an entrance seldom used, and started toward the Ottawa village—intent upon the rescue of Wayne's intrepid spy.

Effie St. Pierre, than whom woman never possessed a braver heart, was content to remain with the wounded major until their return.

The two avengers felt confident of crowning their extremely hazardous enterprise with success; but could they have foreseen the events which transpired in the cave before dawn, it is doubtful whether they would have went forth.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEATH LEAGUE AT WORK.

A TRIO of phantom figures gliding cautiously up iron-gray rocks, wearing a ghastly hue in the dim light of the stars. Now and then they pause in the shade of a crag, and listen with upturned faces. But, not a sound comes to their ears; the night overhead is as silent as that which sleeps upon the bosom of the stream a hundred feet below.

At last, when within perhaps thirty feet of the top of the cliff, they halt at the mouth of a cave which seems to nestle far within the rocks, and whose gloomy aspect, now relieved by the song of a nightingale perched over the aperture, is as foreboding as such a spot can well be.

Now the trio place their heads together, and this is what their lips say:

"Who shall lead the way?"

The question is quickly answered.

"Wacomet."

"It is well," was the whispered answer. "Let Wacomet lead the way into the She-wolf's den, and Leather-lips and the Speckled Snake will crawl at his heels."

"Wacomet is sure that we have found the She-wolf's lair, and our brothers will do nothing but frighten lizards, owls and bats from their holes. The red-man's Terror, dreaming not of a foe, sleeps beside the White Fox, and they will wake in the Ottawa's arms."

Again, but with Wacomet in the van, the trio move forward. The Death League was at work.

Below the trio whom we have seen enter the Girl Avenger's home, the remainder of the band, headed by Joe Girty and Turkey-foot, were exploring other cavernous openings, leading inward from the cliff, for, to a certainty, Nanette's cave was not known to her enemies. Time and again she had been pursued by the Indians, but she had in the end eluded them by darting down the precipice, and disappearing in one of the openings I have described.

The place of Stomah had been filled by the bloodthirsty Speckled Snake, one of the braves who accompanied Wacomet, and a savage who had lost three brothers by the delicate hand of the girl demon. He entered the League with a zest born of the grossest revenge, and took the terrible oath with a vindictiveness that sent a shudder to his co-swearers' hearts.

The low stone roof of the passage in which the trio found themselves compelled them to crawl forward, slowly groping their way like the blind. Every now and then Wacomet would halt, and the three would listen intently for several minutes, and, hearing nothing, glide forward again.

Not a word was uttered by the trio, for the worn surface of the ground over which they crawled told them that the cave at the termination of the labyrinthine corridor was or had been inhabited.

All at once, as Wacomet groped his way around a gigantic rock, which lay in the passage, the murmur of voices brought the Ottawa to a sudden halt.

He had recognized a tone which had sent a thrill to his heart. Wacomet knew all regarding the tragedy beneath the

cottonwood—he had listened to the narrative from the lips of Mitre St. Pierre, scarce six hours before, and he had wished, from the depths of his heart, that he might get possession of the girl his passions yearned to possess. Then, and the Ottawa's heart throbbed exultingly at the thought, the trader would see her no more, until she had become his pale-faced squaw—his slave. Ah! he knew a spot along the very stream that sung its way to the Miami of the Lake, far below them, which no feet save but one other's than his had ever pressed—a spot as difficult to find as the Holy Grail or the heart of Byron. Yes, he rejoiced in the knowledge of such a spot as this, and thither, yet that night, he would convey the owner of the dulcet tones he had first and was still listening to, while he crouched beside the loose rock.

When Leather-lips and Speckled Snake reached Wacomet's side, and before they could hear the murmurs far ahead, the young Ottawa turned suddenly upon them, and in low tones commanded them to retrace their reptatory movements.

Wondering, yet not daring to seek by questions the cause of the strange command, they obeyed, and when they had reached an acute angle, lately passed, Wacomet, full of plots and artifices, spoke :

"Not far ahead," he said, in the lowest of whispers, while the trio's heads touched in the almost palpable gloom, "is the She-wolf's den; but other animals surround her."

A grunt of surprise escaped the listeners' lips.

"While Leather-lips and Speckled Snake tarried behind, Wacomet heard the voice of a pale-face for whose scalp Blue-Jacket would give his own—Wells, the Black Snake's big spy. And not only does he sit at the She-wolf's fire, but with him sit the two spies for whom our braves now hunt."

The two red auditors uttered ejaculations of astonishment that told how welcome the intelligence was to them.

"Then let us glide forward and spring upon the white snakes," said Leather-lips, to whom fear was a stranger. "They watch not for the red-men to-night, and when the Black Snake crawls down the Maumee, we'll throw their scalps into his teeth."

These words found favor in the eyes of Speckled Snake, and when the sorcerer finished, the twain drew their knives

and made a motion to resume their work; but Wacomet's hand gently checked their progress.

"We are not strong enough," he said. "Think! the She-wolf, Kenowatha, and the three pale snakes. There are but three of us—Leather-lips, Speckled Snake and Wacomet. They will fight—fight to the door of Manitou's lodge. They possess the little guns (*i. e.*, pistols); we the long shooting-irons and our knives. Brothers, there must be more of us—the other members of our dread band must be with us, and then—then, we keep the words we have given to the Great Spirit. Go and seek them—our brothers. Wacomet will squat here like the toad until you return, with other tomahawks that glitter in girdles not our own. Go, hasten, before the darkness flies. Our brothers will not be hard to find."

While the two chiefs would fain have signalized themselves by a conflict with the hated spies whom they believed to be in the cave, they concluded to obey Wacomet, a chief superior to them in appointment; so they glided away, and the Ottawa was left alone in the darkness.

By adroit lying he had gained his ends, and prepared to carry his plans into execution. The wily Ottawa knew that the three spies were not in the cave, which also he knew to be tenanted by but two persons—Effie St. Pierre and a man whose voice he could not recognize, though he felt certain that he had heard it before. He knew, too, that his brother chiefs would experience trouble in beating up the other members of the Death League, and prided himself that ere they could return to the cave with the help sent for, he would be far on his journey to the "secret spot," with the young white girl.

Again the Ottawa crept forward, and at length the turning of an angle brought him in full view of the inmates of the cave.

In the center of the underground apartment a bright fire leaped ceilingward, and bathed the entire chamber in a ruddy light. Upon a couch of skins lay the form of a man, whose face the Ottawa at once recognized, and an ejaculation of surprise and triumph, entirely unexpected, bubbled to his lips.

"Not only will Wacomet take the girl," muttered the In-

dian, as he shrunk from the glare of the fire, "but he will take the skins, rifles and gold-pieces, that the great red-coat at the fort offers for the pale-face, who struck his young soldier. Ha! how came the pale soldier here? for the trader shot him, and he fell into the stream."

Then the lips grew still, and for several minutes the Ottawa watched the inmates of the cave, himself as motionless as a statue. Frequent companionship with the whites had made Wacomét, to a great extent, a master of the English language, and every word that fell from the lips of those whom he watched was intelligible to him. Effie St. Pierre sat on the floor of the cave, near the British major's couch, braiding the wealth of hair which she had drawn over her shoulders. With upturned face, Rudolph Runnion was breathing into her ears the story of his twice-told passion, to which the girl was listening calmly and in silence. Still there lurked around her lips a sneer, for the tale to which she was listening; no doubt her mind flitted back to the scene beneath the cottonwood, and her narrow escape from the brutal lusts of the minion of an imbecile king who spoke.

By and by Wacomét ceased to listen to the conversation which had informed him that Major Runnion's wound was healing rapidly, and turned his dark orbs upon the beautiful girl.

Yes, yes, she should be his; of her three lovers—two white, the third red—he should be successful, and unable to restrain himself longer, he crept forward.

Unsuspecting of the red serpent and wolf combined that approached them, the twain remained motionless until—when Wacomét was very near the mouth of the corridor—Effie suddenly darted to her feet, and faced the intruder. Cursing in his bitter tongue, the alarm which his foot had sprung, the Ottawa darted forward with a tiger-like spring, and a moment later the cave was filled with smoke and a deafening report.

A cry, half-shriek, half-groan, burst from Wacomét's lips, and he staggered like a drunken man, then sunk upon his knees.

Still clutching the smoking double-barreled pistol, Effie St. Pierre waited for the smoke to clear away that she might

witness the result of her shot. She knew that it had not been without effect, for she had seen the savage sink to the stones; but yet he might not be dead—only wounded, and, like the bear, a greater terror when wounded than before.

Despite his wounds the pistol-shot had forced Rudolph Runnion from his couch, and now he looked around for something with which to defend himself, for he believed that other braves had followed the stricken chief into the cave. And for him to be taken prisoner by the red-men now, was death, not at their hands, but by those of his countrymen—his comrades in arms.

The smoke had not begun to clear away when a form, bleeding from a frightful wound in the cheek, rushed through the thick volumes, and knocked the pistol from Effie's hand, before she could bring it to bear upon him, so unexpected was the wounded Indian's recovery.

A shriek escaped her when she found herself in the grasp of the devil, who dashed the Briton to earth with a blow with his tomahawk, as he advanced, for his own as well as the girl's safety.

"Wacomet's squaw at last!" hissed the savage, a brutal expression of long-sought triumph lighting up his swarthy face. "The White Star is Wacomet's now! He thought to find She-wolf and White Fox here, but ah! he has discovered better prizes than they. Where they gone?"

Effie returned no answer which might furnish the savages with a clue to the whereabouts of her young friends, and cause them to fall into the hands of the red avengers.

The Ottawa did not press the question, but quickly bound the girl's hands, the while gloating over his triumph, and taunting her with the poor result of her shot.

"When next I shoot I will take better aim," said Effie, looking into the Indian's eyes, "and Wacomet must watch the white girl close that she gets not another shot."

"When she is Wacomet's squaw she will not think of using the little gun," said the red victor, turning to bind Runnion's hands. "Yes, in the hidden hole, when the White Star sings songs to Wacomet's papposes, she will forget how to use the little guns, and build the Ottawa's fire when the sun comes over the hill."

In a short space of time Rudolph Runnion's arms were pinioned at his side, and a blow drew him to his feet. His face wore the ghastly pallor that belongs to the dead, for while securing him, the Indian had told him that a price was set upon his head, and that he intended to deliver him up to the insatiate hounds of justice. For late investigation had proved to the British at Fort Miami that St. Pierre's shot had not immediately proved fatal, if at all, and it was generally believed that the slayer of Firman Campbell yet lived.

While Wacomet bound the Briton, Effie St. Pierre had obtained a piece of keil, and, as well as her pinioned hands would permit, traced these words upon the gray limestone wall of the cave:

"We are the prisoners of Wacomet the Ottawa, destined for a hidden place somewhere." EFFIE.

The chief did not notice the "handwriting on the wall," when he turned to the girl, and pointed to the corridor with his tomahawk.

"We go to Wacomet's home under the ground," he said. "Come!"

The prisoners had stepped forward, when the Ottawa glanced overhead and espied the long string of scalps taken from his red brethren by the hands of the Terror of the Maumee. Beside them hung rifles, tomahawks, and richly ornamented wampums—the trophies of the Girl Avenger's battles. A cry of indignation burst from his lips, when his eye fell upon all these, and a minute later they composed a confused heap at his feet. He caught up the wampums, and threw them on the fire, the scalps quickly followed, and the rifles and other weapons of Indian warfare crowned the crackling heap.

"Won't the She-wolf howl when she returns to her den!" he cried, with fiendish anticipation, as he gazed upon the work of his revengeful hands.

Effie St. Pierre and Rudolph Runnion looked upon the Indian's revenge with different thoughts. They knew that the red tribes would suffer terribly for that night's work—that the Girl Avenger would not rest until every dried scalp was replaced by a fresh one.

Suddenly Wacomet turned toward the corridor again, and

presently he was conducting his prisoners down the gloomy passage. He forced them near his half-naked body by a rope of sinews attached to their wrists, and secured to his girdle, and accompanied his commands for silence by threats of a death too horrible to be mentioned here.

At length the cool night-air fanned the faces of the trio, and looking over Wacomet's broad shoulders Effie saw the scintillating celestial worlds. But a moment later the current of air was interrupted, and Wacomet forced his prisoners into a natural niche before which he had paused. In the deeper gloom of the niche the trio remained as motionless as rocks, and presently they felt six figures, undistinguishable in the blackness, move past, like giant animals. No noise accompanied the new-comers to indicate their identity, but Wacomet knew each one as he passed. They were the members of the Death League, and Joe Girty crept at their head.

When the sounds died away in the gloomy distance, Wacomet drew a breath of relief and again glided toward the opening. Soon the three stood upon the flat rock just beyond the corridor, and faster than was requisite for safety the red chief hurried the two whites down the rocks.

In safety, however, the base of the cliff was reached, and along the bank, toward the head of the little stream, the Indian bounded, compelling his captives to keep pace with him.

He would seek the hidden place with his captives, and then return to the Death League with a mouth full of lies.

Already he had planned a deceptive story, and his wounded cheek would lend confirmation to his words.

Wacomet was a wily dog.

CHAPTER X.

THE RESCUE AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

THE night was not far advanced when Kenowatha and the Girl Avenger reached the vicinity of the Indian village, and concealed themselves in the tall weeds that flourished there on the banks of the Maumee. Beside the flambeaus, they had borne disguises down from the cave, which they now

proceeded to don. Kenowatha had laid aside the gray fox-tails that had formed a portion of his fantastic head-dress, divested himself of all the characteristic ornaments that were wont to distinguish him as the renegade's young protégé, and disguised himself as a common Indian boy—one of the many little red vagabonds that run about the Indian villages deep in mischief, long after their staid parents had yielded to the wooings of the somnolent god. He realized the peril attached to the expedition he had undertaken, he knew that a decree of outlawry had been passed against him, that the common warrior who took his scalp should forthwith be promoted to a full chief, and lead three hundred braves against the Black Snake, who at that hour was marching from Defiance to Victory.

Never before had he inaugurated action so perilous as the present one, and it seemed the pinnacle of rashness for two children—for in stature and years the avengers might be styled thus—to attempt to rescue a white spy from the midst of a tribe that could muster five thousand warriors.

The young twain felt no fear, and prepared for work as calmly as though getting ready for a great festival. They resolved before entering the woods to submit to no captivity.

"Better," said Nanette, "to fall striking dead those who spared not our own parents, than to undergo the terrible tortures inflicted by the Indians and their scarlet queen."

"Ay, ay," returned Kenowatha, "we will not fall into their hands alive. If they get us at all, it will be bereft of life. But they will not capture us, girl. As yet I have not struck a single blow of vengeance. I am not to die thus, no! no! It is decreed by high Heaven that my chosen mark—the red cross—shall become as terrible as your bloody crescent."

When the twain rejoined each other in the woods—for they had separated to don their disguises—a silent pressure of hands, followed, accompanied by a look that told how inseparably their fates were linked together, by the strangest circumstances that ever existed in the untraveled forest wilds.

Their guns were concealed in the grass, and armed but with their knives, concealed but ready for use, about their persons, they stood erect, listened a moment, then marched boldly forward. The most careful observer would have pro-

claimed the couple what they seemed to be—what they counterfeited—an Indian boy and girl—for though they kept together they roamed about the village with a nonchalance that would deceive the most suspicious. Still, as a precautionary measure, they kept in the shadows as much as possible, yet did not shrink from walking into the glare of the ground fires whenever necessary. No suspicion seemed to attach itself to the young would-be-rescuers, and the lazy savages little dreamed that their deadliest foes were in their very midst.

By-and-by in their seemingly aimless saunterings they approached the prison cabin wherein a noble man waited for them—waited behind strong logs and a guard of stalwart braves, whose eyes noted every thing that came near in the fitful starlight.

The avengers were prepared to find the prison strongly guarded, and knew that to rescue the young spy they must have recourse to a strategy seldom if ever used in red villages. The strategy, as perilous and startling in its character as it was unique, found birth in the Girl Avenger's brain, and Kenowatha joined in the scheme. Crouching in the gloomy shadow of a lodge, the twain remained silent until the opaque clouds that crept over the western horizon had completely clothed the sky in blackness, and veiled the shining faces of the stars.

The prison-hut was built of strong beech logs, dove-tailed, after the usual mode of constructing cabins in the West, and the roof was composed of three layers of bark, each two inches thick, and secured by strong wooden pins. The hut had been built for the express purpose of securing prisoners, under the eye of the Girty brothers, and other renegades, and many a noble red and white captive had marched, in the noon of life, from its gloomy recesses to the fatal stake, beneath a pellucid sky. The inmates of the prison-hut were secured to a stake in the center of the structure, thus preventing them from self-escape.

Kenowatha and the Girl Avenger crept to the rear of the hut without attracting the attention of the guards who stood at the door, and with the noiseless and ghostly movements of the lizard, as it ascends the slimy wall, Nanette began to ascend the cabin to its roof. Breathless, and with drawn knife

Kenowatha waited below, ready to give the signal of danger or drive the keen blade into the heart of the first red-man who approached.

The rough exterior of the logs aided the young She-wolf in her perilous undertaking, and presently she found herself grasping the bark coverings of the hut.

For a moment she paused, but no signal or sound coming up from below, she went to work. Bracing herself against the jutting logs at the corner of the structure, her hands, by dint of toil, withdrew several of the wooden pins, which she thrust into her bosom, and a strip of bark was laid aside. Another and another noiselessly followed it, and then, like a cat, the girl dropped from the roof into the interior of the hut. The blackness of palpable darkness surrounded her, and in the lowest of whispers she whispered a name :

"Mark Morgan !"

A noise—no voice—guided her to the captive, and a moment later her knife noiselessly severed his bonds.

"I thought you never were coming," whispered the young spy ; "but better late than never, you know, girl. The guards are dead ? You found the door too well secured for your little hands, eh ?"

"The guards are as watchful as ever," was the response.

"We've stolen a march on them—Kenowatha and I."

Mark Morgan could scarcely repress an exclamation of astonishment at the daring feat.

"Come !" whispered the Girl Avenger, "our work is but half-done. You are not free yet. Go up first ; I'll follow."

In silence Morgan groped his way to the corner, and clambered toward the opening in the roof. While he was performing this action, Nanette crept back to the post, upon whose worn surface she hastily cut her dreaded crescent which she reddened with her own blood, drawn with the point of her knife.

"They will know who's been here when they open the door," she murmured, as she completed her work. "In my native country—La Belle France—visiting people leave their card, and this is mine. They've seen it before," she added, with an inaudible chuckle, "for I am a frequent, though not very welcome, visitor in these parts."

The rescued spy reached the ground in safety; but as Nannette was about to descend, a signal of danger came up from Kenowatha. She paused on the roof, and awaited developments. Vainly she tried to pierce the gloom, as she listened attentively. Suddenly, just the slightest noise floated up to her, and then followed Kenowatha's signal for her to recommence her descent. The danger was passed.

A moment later, she stood on *terra firma*, and Kenowath grasped her hand.

"Stoop!" he whispered in her ear, while he drew the little stained hand nearer the earth.

She obeyed.

Lower and lower the boy thrust her hand, until it touched a man's face, still warm, and covered with what she well knew to be blood. Kenowatha allowed the girl's hand to rest on the dead face for a moment: then he took her finger and ran it through two deep gashes on the bloody forehead, which formed his red mark—the cross.

"He came from the lodges, no doubt, to assassinate our spy," whispered Kenowatha, proud of his work. "But his work is ended. They who wear my cross never admire it. Let us go; the guards may scent their brother's gore."

The Girl Avenger rose to her feet, and a moment later the trio were speeding toward the hidden guns, which reached, they resumed their journey until they paused on the banks of the Maumee several miles below the Ottawa town.

"You may tell her all now," said Mark Morgan, as he took his rescuer's hands to say farewell. "I owe you a life, and if you guard the girl—my white flower—well, I shall owe you another. I will not be gone long. I will meet my General marching this way, and you shall receive his thanks for what you have done to-night. Now mind you watch the girl well; keep sleepless eyes on these persons—Wacomé the trader and Rudolph Runnion. When his wound permits, unless watched, that red-coat will attempt something desperate, for I tell you he has sworn that Effie shall not become my bride—before that happens he will take her life, or worse."

"We will watch those whom you mention as we watch over our own lives against the Death League," said Kenowatha.

"Have no fears on that score; the first hand that is raised against the girl drops in death."

Again Mark Morgan wrung the hands of the hunted twain, promised to return in a few days with Wayne, with whom they yearned to fight, and was gone.

"Now for the She-wolf's den," said Kenowatha, looking into Nanette's face. "We have not broken our word. We told Effie that we were going deer-hunting, and if we haven't hunted and saved one dear, to her, then I've no judgment. Won't the girl open her eyes when we tell her all about her lover, and won't that red-coat wish that the red-skins had scalped him before we found him? Yes, yes, girl, that man must be watched. Mark was right; he's a dog. I've a mind to give him over to them who want him. I'll warrant you that he shot young Campbell in cool blood, for I've seen the very devil in his black eyes. I tell you, girl—Nanette—I'm in for giving him up. I can get to the fort before dawn; the English will not give me over to those who seek my heart's blood. I will appoint a place for a small portion of the garrison to meet me, say, to-morrow night, and then we will deliver the murderer over to justice."

The White Fox's proposition found favor in Nanette's eyes. She felt that Rudolph Runnion was a murderer, deserving a murderer's reward, and then he was the enemy of those who were her friends. Under these circumstances she believed that they would be justified in delivering him over to the avengers of youthful blood, and thus spoke to Kenowatha.

They were nearer the fort now than they would be when at the hidden home, and intent upon accomplishing the work they had resolved upon, Kenowatha glided from his companion's side, and a moment later was lost in the gloom. He promised to meet her in the cave some time during the coming day.

Freed from the renegade's protégé, the young She-wolf resumed her journey to her home, and at length crept into the gloomy opening from whence they had executed their exit a few hours before. She never dreamed of the thrilling events that had transpired during her absence, and glided along the underground corridor entirely unsuspecting of danger. When

near the cave proper, she noted a smoldering fire ahead, and very naturally concluded that Effie and the British criminal had fallen asleep.

On, on, she glided, and at length entered the large apartment wrapped in demi-gloom, despite the efforts of the dying blaze to the contrary. The walls, in which a score of natural niches or holes remained, were shrouded in almost impenetrable gloom, while the deathlike silence boded ill for the hunted beauty. When she crossed the threshold, she turned to the couches ; but before her eyes could greet them, a terrific yell broke the stillness, and the niches poured forth the members of the Death League !

For hours Joe Girty and his band had waited for the coming of the hunted ones, nor had they darted from their concealment until they were satisfied that Kenowatha was not with the Girl Avenger. The bloodthirsty band hemmed her in on all sides save one, for with the yell of triumph, perhaps untimely given, she had sprung against the wall, and faced her enemies with a stern defiance that proclaimed to them that she asked no quarter, expected none, and none would give. Startled at her demeanor, the seven—for Wacomat, with his fertile budget of lies, had joined the band—paused before the hunted one, with drawn knives and uplifted tomahawks, eager to drink her blood. They scarce expected resistance on the girl's part ; they thought that their numbers would awe her into submission ; but in such thought they found themselves sorely mistaken.

While thus the Death League stood, inwardly admiring the bravery and seeming rashness of the hunted girl, the ornamented rifle shot to her shoulder, a loud report filled the cavern, and the Speckled Snake shrieked and fell dead upon the stones !

Then the Death League were roused to action ; then the rifle of the Girl Avenger described rapid circles around her head, for, with a cry of defiance, she had sprung from the wall ; and the battle for the mastery, against the greatest odds that pale-face ever fought, raged in that gloomy place.

When Nanette darted forward, she kicked the dying brands into the faces of her foes, through whose numbers her clubbed rifle cut a swath, that closed a moment later, and had to be

opened again. At length, with half of her enemies placed *hors du combat*, she reached the opposite wall, and the remainder darted forward to end the conflict.

No clubbed rifle met them; they brought up suddenly against the limestone rock, and realized that the young She-wolf was gone!

Turkey-foot, whose cheek the lock of the Girl Avenger's weapon had dreadfully mangled, was the first to regain his composure. He snatched an ember from the floor, and fanned it into a flame by whirling it over his head.

"The She-wolf shall not escape the Death League!" he cried, darting forward, followed by Wacomet and several others.

The torch revealed a passage leading into the rock, and with a shout of triumph the chief sprung into it.

The corridor was almost devoid of angles, and suddenly Turkey-foot reached its termination against rocks that gave forth no hollow sound.

With a cry of dismay the chief turned to his brethern, and all threw an inquiring stare into each other's faces.

Had the She-wolf dissolved into the damp air that filled the passage?

While this mental interrogative puzzled the brains of the revengers, a shout from behind drove an ejaculation of horror from their lips.

The Girl Avenger was in their rear.

CHAPTER XI.

THE END OF THE BATTLE.

TURKEY-FOOT was the first to regain his composure, and consequently the first to speak.

"Watchemenetoc aids the young She-wolf," he said, as calm as the zenith of a summer's sky, "but we are strong enough to vanquish both. Three of our band lie stiff and cold in her den, and shall she advance, though all the beings of darkness aid her, and shoot us down like sheep? Shall the Death League be exterminated ere the dawn of light? Shall none

live to meet the Black Snake on the field of battle? Let my brothers answer. 'Tis Turkey-foot, the Ottawa, that speaks."

By Leather-lips, the sorcerer, the chief's speech was answered.

"We shall not die ignobly," he cried. "If we can, let us escape and hunt her down at another time. Now she stands by the small hole ready to strike us down, one at a time, before our arms can reach her. She can not long escape us; we can, we will hunt her down before we meet the Black Snake. Let us escape."

But now arose the question by what avenue should they gain freedom?

The Girl Avenger did not press her new success; she seemed confident of ultimate triumph—that every fleeting moment brought the quartette nearer the dark river. She stood with ready rifle, knife and tomahawk, at the orifice and awaited with strange patience for the approach of the doomed band. Around her, easily distinguishable in the light of a number of dying brands, lay the forms of three members of the League of Death, and not far away stood as many more suffering from wounds that laid bones bare. Her right foot rested upon Speckled Snake, whose warm scalp bled in her girdle beside those of his red brethren whose brains the butt of her avenging rifle had dashed against the limestone walls. Her escape from the corridor that now confined the remainder of the League was easily accomplished. The cave, as I have before mentioned, was far below the surface of the cliffs, and consisted of gloomy apartments above one another like the rooms of some great hotel. All of the dark passages had never been explored by the Girl Avenger; but she had examined enough for utility and comfort. In the roof of the particular corridor above mentioned, was the orifice of a passage whose tortuous track brought the traverser to the main cave through one of the somber niches. With a view to future use in times of danger, the Girl Avenger, by means of strong wooden levers, had rolled a loose stone to the edge of the opening, over which it could be pushed with the strength of her slender arms. When she reached the termination of the corridor she threw herself up into the higher passage, gave the stone a trial of her strength, and heard—for it was too dark to see—it settle down over the cavity.

Then taking the right corridor, for others led different ways from the aperture, she gained the cave again, and gave forth the shout which drove the color from the faces of her foes.

By excessive manipulation Turkey-foot's torch burned with a bright flame, and revealed to their eyes the avenue by which their bitter enemy had escaped; but the great stone completely blocked it now.

The next moment Leather-lips, the Hercules of his nation, sprung forward, put his shoulders against the boulder, and exerted all his strength, which did nothing more than to move it a hair's breadth. With a cry of anger he struck it with his tomahawk, and the sound of the blows were wafted to the ears of the avenger in the cave.

The stone must be moved: without its removal the League of Death would become extinct. They knew that a passage above them led to the main cave, for events had just demonstrated this, and could they gain the passage they could assail the Girl Avenger from two points, and the battle would result favorably to them, after all.

"Now all hands to the stone!" cried Joe Girty, who had observed the result of Leather-lips' performance. "Leather-lips moved it a bit, and can we not throw it entirely back? I can throw near half a ton over my head, or could a short time since, though now I may be even stronger than ever. Now, braves, for your lives summon all the strength you ever possessed. If we move that stone our hands will grow redder than ever in her heart; if we fail, her hands will bathe in ours. Now! Snakes! I wish I was Samson!"

The band exerted all its strength, and the result was almost unexpected—the stone was raised, and before it could settle down again, a second putting forth of strong hands had rolled it from the aperture.

In the glare of the torch every sweaty face glowed with triumph and revenge.

"Now!" said Turkey-foot, "she is ours, the Manitou put new strength into our limbs, and the power of Watchemene-toe could not prevail against it. We must now fight her. Wacomet and Leather-lips will creep back and crouch in the

gloom beyond her eyes and the fires, in this dark hole. Turkey-foot and the white Ottawa will climb up into the hole over our heads, and attack her in the rear. Now go. She knows not that we have moved the stone; and when the hoot of the owl pierces your ears, spring from the blackness upon her."

Before Wacomet and Leather-lips turned to their mission, they saw the chief and the renegade draw themselves up into the opening, after extinguishing the torch.

In the darkness near the orifice of the lower corridor crouched Wacomet and the sorcerer, waiting for the attacking signal. They knew that the Girl Avenger still occupied her post, for they could distinguish the barrel of her rifle between them and the torches. Once or twice Wacomet was on the point of rushing forth, but Leather-lips restrained him and bade him wait for the signal.

At last it came, seemingly from the wooded banks of the stream beyond the cave, which circumstance the twain did not pause to note, but darted forward.

Leather-lips was in the advance and grasped the glittering rifle-barrel as he bounded from the corridor. It fell on easy prey; there was no hand to contend with him for the possession of it, and no form, save those of his slaughtered countrymen, greeted him in the great cave.

Where was the Girl Avenger, and where Girty and the Ottawa chief? Surely the latter had given the signal, for it had pierced their ears and impelled them forward. In the center of the cave, splendid targets for the unerring aim of the Girl Avenger, and statues of indecision, stood the two chiefs gazing into each other's faces. The torches—or rather the brands which had now assumed the office of torches—bathed the entire cave in a mellow light and revealed every object to the statuary pair.

While thus they stood, the signal—the hoot of the night-owl—was thrice repeated, now in an imperative and half-angry tone, and a cry of astonishment mingled with the darkly mysterious, parted the chief's lips. Why did not the others show themselves, and cease repeating the signals which had been obeyed? Were they to fight the She-wolf alone, or had Turkey-foot and his white friend wandered off into other dark

passages in which the twain believed the earth overhead to abound?

Suddenly the peculiar scream of the white heron came to their ears, and a few minutes later a footstep faintly sounded in the main corridor. Leather-lips clutched his companion's arm, and drew him back into the niche, where they crouched with eyes fixed upon the main passage.

Presently a head—a human cranium—no further from the ground than the head of a cur, became visible in the corridor, and the two chiefs almost uttered a cry when they recognized it as the head of *Kenowatha*! It appeared to them but for a moment—just long enough for the keen eyes of the white Indian to take a quick survey of the cave—then was withdrawn. The red watchers held their breath, and waited further developments, believing that fate intended to play the boy into their hands. If he had not encountered the Girl Avenger, he would become more bold after a spell, and enter the cave. For this they waited, and in their eagerness to secure the boy, forgot their brethren wandering about in unexplored passages, which might lead to death too horrible to contemplate.

At length the head again appeared, and this time it was followed by the entire figure of *Kenowatha*. He crept forward on all fours, his rifle clutched in his right hand, and dragging at his side his tomahawk in his left. Presently, seemingly satisfied that no foes lurked near enough to take his life, the White Fox rose to his feet and stood over the dead Indians. He had gazed upon them long enough to see the scarlet crescent upon their brows, when the two chiefs darted forward. The great hand of the red sorcerer gripped the boy's arm; but with an agility and strength entirely unexpected by the savages, he tore himself away, sprung to the further side of the cave, and threw his rifle to his shoulder. Instantaneous with this latter action on the part of the youth Leather-lips darted forward; but the rifle broke the demisilence and the sorcerer measured his giant length on the stones.

The chief had scarcely touched the floor of the cave when *Kenowatha* sprung upon *Wacomat*. The fire of vengeance flashed from the youth's eyes, and the Indian upon first

thought felt disposed to meet him. But when his mind recurred to the prisoners he had borne from the cave a short time previous—to the reward he could obtain for the stricken soldier—to the prize in the person of Effie St. Pierre which he would lose should the battle prove disastrous to him, he retreated to the main corridor, into which he darted, as Kenowatha's gun tore a ghastly furrow down his naked back.

Knowing that it would be useless to follow Wacomét, Kenowatha turned to place his mark—the bloody cross—upon Leather-lips' brow, to behold the spot where the sorcerer had fallen untenanted!

"Kenowatha's bullet did not find his heart," he said, in a tone of bitter disappointment, "and the red sorcerer has fled. But Kenowatha will meet him again—when the broad sunlight falls upon his face, and then—then the mark shall crown his head. Ha!" and the speaker suddenly sprung to the opposite wall, his eyes fastened upon something thereon.

Suddenly he paused before that which had excited his curiosity, and read, in French, the words that Effie had traced upon the limestone with the keil:

"We are the prisoners of Wacomét, the Ottawa—destined for a hidden place somewhere."

The handwriting on the wall sent a thrill to Kenowatha's heart. Who were included in the word "*we*?" If Nanette was a prisoner why had she been permitted to mark the dead Indians—still more, why were they still lying in the cave? The information was enveloped in mystery to Kenowatha, and the longer he gazed upon the words the more mysterious they grew. Prisoners of Wacomét alone! Why not of the entire League of Death, and why was Wacomét present but a moment since, and not with his prisoners?

Unconscious, in the attempt to solve the mystery, that he was exposing his person to the balls and tomahawks of those who sought his life, Kenowatha stood before the wall until a footstep suddenly aroused him and caused him to face the niche in his rear. Immediately upon the precipitate retreat of Wacomét, the White Fox had rammed a bullet home, and now his rifle was directed at a spot just below a tuft of feathers in the niche. There he knew was a face, and whose face save that of one of his bitterest foes?

A moment later might have sealed the doom of the person, when his name, pronounced as softly as woman ever spoke, came from the niche:

"Kenowatha."

He sprung forward, a figure darted from the niche, and in the center of the cave he met the Girl Avenger!

"The battle is ended, Kenowatha," she said, touching the trio of fresh scalps in her girdle. "They dreamed of an easy victory, not of a disastrous defeat. The Death League will never forget this night. But a moment since I saw Turkey-foot, the white Ottawa and Wacommet meet on the edge of the stream. The great chief and the white Ottawa got lost in the many dark paths above our heads, and at last found their way through passages which they could never traverse again, to the water. I heard them lift the stone away, and I glided to a spot which they could not reach. Ah! Kenowatha, I wished for you at my side when the red devils surrounded me. Oh, we would have annihilated the red League; but, boy, their time is fast coming. They may fill up their ranks whenever we strike, but soon there will be no ranks to fill. See! where are my string of scalps? where the guns I tore from hands cold in death, where all my trophies? Gone, boy, gone! Oh, I'll have a terrible revenge now: for every scalp the demons burned to-night I will have two, and I swear that the League of Death shall melt away before my rifle."

"Before *our* rifles say, girl," said Kenowatha, clutching her arm as he looked up into her face.

"*Ours*, then, be it," she cried. "But, Kenowatha, where's the White Rose and the bad red-coat?"

Kenowatha pointed to the writing on the pale wall, and Narette soon mastered it.

"I read the past through those words," she said, turning to the youth, who waited with impatience for her to speak. "Wacommet must have entered the cave in advance of his brethren. Seeking the honor promised by his tribe to the Indian who should rid the world of me, he came hither alone, I say, found the girl and the major here, and took them captives. 'Destined to a hidden spot somewhere,' writes the pale girl on the stones. That place must be discovered, boy—ay, discovered before the white spy returns, else what will he

think of us—of our promise, that we would watch the girl and well. I know you are with me, Kenowatha," and her little hand stole into his, which action sent a thrill to his heart, "and when I swear that I will give my feet no rest until Effie is torn from the snares of the red snake, I know that your heart, beating in unison with mine, responds, amen."

"Yes, yes, our lives have grown into one existence, Nanette, and we will rescue the girl that she may receive the kiss of pure love when her brave lover returns. But, girl, how long will your vengeance last?"

The eyes of the Girl Avenger sought the stones, and wandered over them with a listless stare.

"I don't know, Kenowatha," she said, at length, a pearl-drop glistening upon her cheek. "Why did you ask?"

It was his turn now to avert his eyes, and in his silence she read what he would yet feared to speak.

"Boy," she said, breaking the silence that reigned in the cave, "I know all that you would say, and, for your sake, I promise this one thing—that when *you* sheathe the knife of vengeance in your girdle, I will say, 'enough!'"

He turned his eyes upon her with a flash of joy, gently drew her to his heart, and rained warm kisses on her dimpled cheek.

"Have no fears that you shall not have your fill of vengeance, girl," he said; "for not until the Death League is exterminated—not until the Indians have made bloody reparation for the loss you have sustained to-night, will I sheathe the blade of vengeance. Only I wanted some one to love me, girl—some bright future to look ahead to, beyond these dark days. I have it, I am happy!"

After awhile she said to him:

"Were you to the British fort?"

"No. In the dark wood, something told me that all was not right here. The further I went, the stronger that something's voice grew, and my mind knew no peace until I turned my face toward you. I gave our signal, which did not reach you in your hiding-place, I suppose.

"I heard it not, boy," she answered, and her lips moved to speak on, when the cry of the heron—twice repeated, came from beyond the cave to their ears.

Undoubtedly it was a signal.

"Come," said Nanette; "we might as well commence our hunt for the white Rose to-night as any other time. Wacommet will not return to his people without visiting his prisoners. He is playing a double game, and unless yon words were read by the White Ottawa during the fight—which I think improbable—the secret of captivity remains with Wacommet and ourselves. Ha! the white heron again. Come! The red demons can have this cave now; thank God, 'tis not the only hiding-place on earth."

A minute later, the twain glided from the cave, now tenanted by the three corpses. that formed a ghastly group in the center.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BRITISH MAJOR'S PLOT.

A SHORT time after gaining the bottom of the cliffs with his captives, Wacommet the Ottawa paused before what seemed to be a dense net-work of creepers attached to the gray rocks. It was near midnight now, and an ominous silence brooded everywhere. When first the traitor left the cave, he heard Leather-lips and Speckled Snake signaling the other braves; but now the signals were no longer heard, and, fearing that the two wings had come together, the Ottawa hurried his prisoners over the stones faster than ever, taking good care to keep in the shade of the cliffs, for the moon was scaling the eastern horizon, and would soon make objects in the deep ravine easily distinguishable.

The two captives drew long breaths of relief when at last the Indian halted, and Effie found herself wondering if his home was not near, for she was much fatigued, and her feet were sore. She was about to question Wacommet regarding the location of the hidden spot, when he suddenly strode forward toward the tangled vines, and his captives were surprised to see him part the long hangers with his right hand, and display an opening leading straight into the rock.

"The hidden spot," ejaculated Effie St. Pierre, looking up

into the major's face. "The sharpest spy in the world would pass and repass this place a thousand times and never discover it."

The sharp ear of Wacomét caught the girl's words, uttered scarce above a whisper, and he ~~said~~, as he pushed his captives into the gloom, springing after ~~them~~ himself:

"Yes, the serpent has crawled by Wacomét's hole in the ground, and never entered, for his sharp eyes saw it not. Wacomét tracked the she-grizzly here once, entered boldly, slew her with his knife, and brought thither his red mistress."

The corridor leading to the main cave proved a tortuous way ; but at last the party reached the termination. A light burned in the center of the apartment, and before it, arranging gaudy feathers in her long black hair, sat Wacomét's red queen. She arose to greet her master, but when her dark, lustrous eyes fell upon the beautiful Effie St. Pierre, her hands clenched involuntarily, and her lips quivered with passion.

"Who does Wacomét bring to his cave home?" she demanded, a flush of anger mounting to her temples.

"The spies of the accursed Black Snake hunt for the pale flower ; they have pierced the fair one's lover with their balls, but Wacomét saved her and the Briton and they are here till the coming of another night."

"And they shall go, then?"

"Yes, Wacomét swears it ; when the stars sleep and shine again, they shall go."

Then the outlaw drew Ewana aside, and for a few moments they conversed in low tones.

"Guard the prisoners well until I return," said Wacomét, in a tone loud enough to reach the captives' ears, at length, "and at the first show of attempts at escape, shoot them down like dogs."

Then, satisfied that he had dissipated Ewana's jealousies, and that all would go on swimmingly at the cave until his return, the Ottawa glided off to join his comrades in their search for the young She-wolf.

Ewana proceeded to bind the captives' feet with deer-thongs, and made them separate couches between which she sat, and again resumed the arranging of her hair.

In the silence which followed, Effie St. Pierre, tired and sore, fell back on the pillow of mink-skins, stuffed with the small soft feathers of the river snipe, and soon was fast asleep. Her last thoughts were that the Girl Avenger and Kenowatha would read her writing on the wall when they returned, and would give no rest to their feet until she was snatched from Wacomet's hands.

The thoughts and condition of Major Runnion were far different from those of the hopeful girl.

Contrary to her, he did not close his eyes, nor did he lie down upon the skinny couch. For many minutes he occupied a half-reclining position, studying Ewana as she arranged her hair. When he had arrived at a certain conclusion, he gently whispered the Shawnee girl's pretty cognomen.

She turned and moved nearer him.

"Nearer, Ewana," he said, when she had paused; "the pale flower must not hear what I have to say."

This drew the red girl to the edge of the couch, where she paused and looked inquiringly down into the Briton's face.

"What would the scarlet soldier of the king have with Ewana?" she asked, while the major, for a moment thrown from his plots by her radiant, voluptuous loveliness, was contemplating her face, the fairest one save that which he coveted he had ever met in the forest.

"I want to tell Ewana that Wacomet's tongue has traveled from the trail of truth."

She shot him a look of indignation, and he saw the flood of jealousy rise in her dark orbs, as she glanced at the pale-faced sleeper.

"It can not be," she murmured; "Wacomet has lived with Ewana for many moons, yet has his tongue never wandered from the truthful trail."

"There are times when the best red-skins are false," continued Runnion, "and this is one of Wacomet's false times. Now I will tell you the truth, Ewana."

The narration that followed need not be written here, though the substance might not prove uninteresting. The major dwelt at length, though he spoke rapidly, on Wacomet's passion for Effie St. Pierre, how he had been driven from the

trading-post at the muzzle of old Mitre's rifle—how he had sworn to make the white girl his bride to the total exclusion of his red mistress, whom he no doubt intended to assassinate when the proper time should arrive. All this Rudolph Runnion poured into the ears of the red girl, whose jealous passions were so aroused that she drew a tiny knife from her bosom, and hissed into the Briton's ear :

"The Pale Flower shall not nestle on Wacomet's cheek when he returns ; he shall find her withered, beautiful no longer, as cold as the white flowers that grow by the frozen rivers."

The soldier noted the mad girl's vengeance-laden glance at Effie St. Pierre, and his hand closed on the arm that held the knife aloft.

"No, no," he said, rising himself despite the irritation it caused his wounds, and placing his mustached lips at Ewana's ear. "The Manitou by other means than the knife will rid the red girl of her pale rival. I have become an outlaw ; my people offer a price for my head, and Wacomet has said that he would lead me to them, or them to me. Cut these bonds ; then, the bonds of the girl, too, and I will bear the girl away. Over in Canada, the lands of my king, I have strong people, and they will protect me from the white and red man-hunters. Let me carry the white girl from Wacomet's cave, for if I don't he will make her his bride."

For a moment the red girl was undecided how to act ; above all things she wished to get rid of her white rival, yet she did not want to incur Wacomet's hatred. She believed all the soldier had poured into her ears regarding her master's love, yet she loved him as she had ever done since the days of childhood.

"Haste !" cried Runnion, taking advantage of the girl's indecision ; "Wacomet may return, and then what becomes of poor Ewana ! Shall she live to see a white snake steal Wacomet's smiles from her ? I thought Ewana was a Shawnee."

The glistening knife descended, and the bonds that bound the major's feet fell apart !

Casting a thankful look into the girl's face he sprung to his feet. No time was to be lost, for it was now near dawn, and Wacomet was liable to return at any moment. He step-

ped to Effie's couch, and touched her arm. She opened her eyes with a start, and for a moment did not comprehend her situation.

"Girl, it is I," he said. "We must leave at once. Ewana believes that Wacomet loves you—that he intends to murder her and make you his bride. See! she whets her already keen knife upon a stone. I have succeeded in freeing myself, and, girl, we must fly at once. Better in the forest, though it swarm with dangers, than in the power of a jealous squaw. Come!"

Mechanically the young girl yielded; while, obedient to the instructions of the soldier, Ewana did not notice their movements. The soldier supplied himself with hunting accouterments, a quantity of ammunition; then they glided into the gloomy corridor, and out into the recesses of the forest.

"Whither are we going?" asked Effie.

The Briton turned suddenly upon her, and a faint smile played with his sensual lips as he answered:

"I might as well tell you first as last," he said. "We're bound for Canada."

Effie could not repress the light cry that welled to her lips, and the word that followed was hissed forth with all the bitterness she could summon:

"Villain!"

CHAPTER XIII.

WACOMET'S DEATH-SONG.

THE Briton had not escaped any too soon, for, ere a half-hour had passed, the Ottawa's form darkened the opening. Advancing hurriedly to the chamber he paused, his face contorted with sudden passion. Then a half-howl, half-shriek burst from his lips.

Startled by the cry, Ewana sprung to her feet to find a great hand closed upon her beautiful throat, and a choking sensation almost rendering her unconscious.

"Where's the white girl and the red-coat?" shrieked Wacomet, as he shook the girl at arm's length, still griping her

throat. "Tell Wacomet what's become of his captives, or he'll shake Ewana till her eyes drop from her head."

He released her throat to clutch her arm with his left hand, while his clenched right one itched to beat the life out of her frame.

"Now speak!" he hissed, "speak before the Ottawa's hand gives you but one eye."

As he uttered this threat he raised his iron fist.

"They're—gone," she said, gaspingly, instinctively shrinking from the irate chief. "Wacomet intended to make the white girl his squaw, and so the red-coat bore her from his cave."

"Where was Ewana, then?"

"Braiding her hair," was the truthful reply, couched in a courageous tone.

"And you let them go?" yelled Wacomet, at the top of his voice, for his passion was now utterly ungovernable. "You listened to the tale that lying dog breathed into your ears and turned your face away while they went?"

"Ewana did all this—she did it because she loved Wacomet—because she did not want a White Rose to nestle in his bosom."

A shriek of rage that would have done credit to demons was the Ottawa's reply, and his clenched hand descended upon the girl's face once, twice, thrice in rapid succession.

Then he hurled her from him, drew his tomahawk and darted upon the body.

But not to strike.

Two pairs of eyes had followed his steps through the woods and two pairs of stealthy feet had penetrated the dark corridor.

Kenowatha and the Girl Avenger were there!

As the Ottawa whirled his weapon to strike it was knocked from his grasp by a blow that broke his strong right arm.

With a shriek of mingled rage and pain, he dropped the senseless girl, and turned upon his antagonists. The Girl Avenger's rifle covered his heart, while Kenowatha looked upon the dramatic tableau with folded arms!

"Wacomet, your time has come at last," said the Girl Avenger, calmly, yet with an unconcealed tone of triumph.

"One night four years ago, come the 24th of November, a band of red-skins surrounded a cabin near the mouth of the Maumee. The flames of their happy home was the first warning of the inmates' danger, and when they sprung from their beds the butchery had begun. A father, crippled by disease, an aged mother, two brothers, and three sisters, fell beneath the hatchets of the red demons, and but one of that sweet household—one destined by God to be the avenger of her race—escaped the work of death. Unseen by the butchers she flew to the forest, and has since been a terror to your accursed race. Wacomet, you were there; I saw you strip Josie's golden scalp from her baby head, and I swore that this hand should take yours.

"Of all who participated in that dark night's work, but three are left: yourself, Turkey-foot, and Joe Girty, the white dog, for in the woods, this night we have met and slain the wolf's whelp, Leather-lips. Not one has died a natural death—all have fallen by my hand—these fingers have torn their black scalps from their heads. Your time is here, and as you are the bravest chief in the red tribe, I grant you what I have granted to no red-man—time to sing his death-song. Therefore, Wacomet, soon to see Watchemenetoc, if you would, sing while there is yet time."

The Girl Avenger spoke in the Ottawa tongue, but not a muscle moved on the doomed chief's face. He knew that his last hour had come, knew, too, that his doom was just, and presently from his lips pealed the first notes of his death-song. He did not make it tedious; in few words he recounted his warlike deeds, craved a corner in the Manitou's lodge, besought victory for his countrymen against Wayne, regretted that he could not prove a red whirlwind against the pale-faces in the coming struggle, and then closed.

The avenger of her slaughtered race glanced at Kenowatha, as the chief finished, then her gaze flitted along the glistering barrel, and a report no louder than the bursting of a percussion-cap broke the stillness, and Wacomet was with his fathers!

"But two left!" she murmured, as she turned to Kenowatha, "and ere many hours they, too, will be gone. But, boy, we must rouse that girl and gain from her all the informa-

tion we can about Effie and that villainous major. I scarcely doubt but that ere this he has struck the Canada trail.

A moment later the twain bent over senseless Ewana, whom they at length restored to herself.

"Speak fast, Ewana," said Nanette. "Where are the White Rose and the red-coat?"

"In the great woods going toward the homes of the king's white people," was the reply, when the girl recovered from her astonishment, at seeing the two forms bending over her.

"When did they leave, Ewana?"

"Just before Wacomet came to his cave. What! is *he* dead?" and her eyes flashed with triumph, when they fell upon the motionless form of the Ottawa. "Then Ewana can go back and kiss her old father before he dies."

The death of the chief whom she once loved now seemed a relief to the poor red girl.

"We must leave Ewana," said Nanette, "and she can now go back to her parents. We seek the White Rose and the red-coated dog."

The Indian girl stretched forth her hands, the youthful avengers grasped them in a silent, fervent pressure, and left her alone with her dead chief.

"They can not be far away," said the Girl Avenger, as she and Kenowatha glided through the dark corridor. "We will soon overtake them, and should the red-coat raise his hand against us or the girl, there'll be no hanging in Fort Miami. I'm so glad that it is broad daylight now, for we can follow their trail faster than they can travel."

CHAPTER XIV.

WHAT HAPPENED IN A RAVINE.

WHEN Rudolph Runnion struck the military trail, leading around the western shore of Lake Erie to the Canadas, he quickened his gait, for it was his desire to get beyond the Maumee valley as soon as possible.

He knew that the commander at Fort Miami had set a

price upon his head, that a number of his comrades had doffed their scarlet for the Indians' paint, that they might be the better able to crown their hunt for him with success. All this, and much more, had he learned from Wacomét, and, therefore, must avoid even his old comrades if he would escape the assassin's doom—for an assassin he was, having killed Firman Campbell in cold blood, with little or no just provocation.

After the discovery of his treachery, Effie relapsed into silence, though now and then she shot him a look of scorn which caused him to avert his eyes.

At length, while the first beams of day were penetrating the wood, they reached a spot where the trail entered a ravine, through which it ran a short distance, and then emerged again in the forest, striking boldly toward the north. The major entered the ravine with no small degree of apprehension, for he was now upon especially dangerous ground.

The banks of the ravine were not high, but were covered with a thick growth of underbrush, which now and then revealed a fissure large enough to contain several men. Before entering this place, and he could not avoid it, the Briton looked carefully to the priming of rifle and pistols, and loosened his knife and Wacomét's tomahawk in his girdle.

One-half of the journey through the ravine was accomplished before either uttered a word, when a cry suddenly broke from Effie's lips:

"Indians!"

As the Briton turned his gaze to the point indicated, the clicking of rifles smote his ears, and he caught a glimpse of a plumed head before it was withdrawn, beyond the crifice of one of the fissures. Instinctively he looked about for a point of defense, and fortunately found himself at the mouth of one of the fissures, almost concealed by the surrounding underbrush.

"Girl, spring into that hole; I'll follow," he said, without looking at Effie. "Once within that, we can whip all the Indians in the Maumee valley. I'm somewhat acquainted with the fissures in these rocks; each one is but the opening to an impregnable natural fort. Go, girl!"

Almost before the last command had left his lips, Effie had

a current of cool, fresh air passed his lips—or was it fancy? No! it was truth.

Even in such a moment, he reasoned clearly and logically. If there was a constant draught, then there must be an opening to the outer air. If the air could find a passage, might not he, as well?

He breathed more and more free. Hope was reviving him, nearly as much as the fresh air. He listened for his comrade—he fancied he heard a faint groan, at no great distance. He called aloud; but only the moaning gasp replied. Holding an arm over his mouth, he staggered to his feet. The flannel shirt was saturated, and to his great joy, Cook found that he could breathe through it with comparative ease.

He staggered on until he fell over the senseless body of his young comrade. Exerting all his strength, the Californian dragged Dane to the water, and bathed his face. Ten minutes later the young man had recovered his consciousness.

Then Cook whispered his hope—and that too reinvigorated Dane. Together they examined the end of the passage before them; by the sense of touch. All their torchwood was out.

The dirt felt loose—as if it had lately been placed there. And then, standing upon Cook's bent back, Dane found that the surmise was true—that a portion of the roof had caved in, thus blocking up the passage.

Only for a very brief time could they stand erect; the smoke was dense, hot and suffocating. But the water proved an invaluable ally. Through its aid they were enabled to live, to breathe, to work.

It was a long task, for the cave had been considerable but at length they bored a hole through to the passage beyond, large enough to admit their persons. Then thoroughly soaking their clothing, they boldly ventured on through the darkness.

The draught seemed to increase as they progressed, and the air to be less laden with smoke. Or that may have been fancy, now their hopes were rising. Still it was a bitter struggle, and they nearly sunk beneath it. Yet, as we know they succeeded in reaching safety

Jaded, completely exhausted, they dared not venture entirely away from the cave, knowing that such bitter enemies were near, and sheltered amidst the fringe of bushes, they lay down and slept long and peacefully.

It was day when they awoke. Nearly the first object that met their gaze as they peered forth upon the slope, was a party of Apaches filing by. That told them the folly of venturing forth, and fearing the worst had befallen their friends, they returned to the cave, and sought out a snug place of concealment. This they found—and more besides. But of that anon.

Through that day they suffered hunger and thirst rather than run any risks. Expecting a search for their bodies would follow as soon as the rocks cooled after the fire, they had not dared even indulge in a pipe, but the day passed by without their hearing or seeing any thing more of the Apaches. The reader, doubtless, knows why this search was not made. The Apaches had their hands full of other work.

The Californian looked grave as he arose from examining the wounded man. Jessie shuddered as she read his face.

"There is no—no hope?"

"I am sorry to say it, but a lie would do no good now," sadly replied Cook, for something in this woman stirred his heart strangely. "You may bid him good-by; an hour hence may be too late."

The injured man stirred—slowly raising his head, supporting his weight upon one hand. As he gazed wonderingly around, a brand broke in two and a bright flame momentarily flashed up, clearly outlining the party.

Minnie shrunk back in horror. In this man she fancied she beheld the murderer of her father. The long, matted hair and beard—the shaggy dress of skins, now torn and tattered by the wolf-jaws all corresponded to the picture drawn by John Temple.

"Jessie—where are we—what does this mean?" muttered the man, in a wondering tone, as the woman knelt beside him.

"Thank God! you know me—you remember, William?"

"Yes—why shouldn't I? I remember all—how those

he felt his already greatly impaired strength deserting him. Now and then a contrary current of wind would drive the smoke away and enable him to see his exulting enemies ; but this was only for a moment, and before he could drop one with his pistols, he would be forced to resume the coat and fight the smoke again. The heat was as intolerable as its black accompaniment. The undergrowth fringed the very edge of the fissure, and when it took fire great blisters appeared on the felon's skin, and the flames scorched his coat.

There seemed but one result to the startling drama. The foes in the ravine watched their work with self-congratulations of triumph, for they already felt the daring culprit in their grasp, and in fancy saw him paying the penalty of his crime between heaven and earth in Fort Miami.

A short distance from the main body of painted braves, stood a man easily recognizable as Mitre St. Pierre. Though not clad in the nudity that characterized his followers, he wore a head-dress that proclaimed him a chief among the Ottawas. True to his word, given to Mark Morgan, in the heat of passion, he had joined the Indians against the Americans, found himself elevated to the dignity of a chief at once, and entered into the work of blood, with the avidity of the jungle hyena. Upon the morning when he and his band discovered the major and his captive on the Canada trail, he was hunting for one of Mad Anthony's spies, who had ridden through the Ottawa village in the broad light of day, and who was supposed to be in the neighborhood of the ravine.

"Girl, where are you?" called out Rudolph Runnion, somewhat alarmed at the silence that succeeded his harsh reply to her suggestion of surrender. "Speak, and let me know if you're living yet. The end is near at hand, and a bloody ending it's going to be."

No answer greeted his listening ears, and determined to ascertain the situation and condition of the woman for whom he had risked so much, he left his station and darted back into the smoky gloom. He turned the angle when his foot struck the object he sought, and his hand touched Effie's face. The lips were cold, the white hand in the same condition ; but he had no time to investigate further, for a series of yell told him that the bloodthirsty band was at the mouth of the little

cave. With the cry of "dead!" he dropped Effie's lifeless hand, and turned to sell his life with the price demanded by the tigress when brought to bay.

He found no smoke in the main part of the cave, for a gust had blown it from the fissure, which was now filled with a mass of dark forms.

In an instant his pistol spoke and a light gleamed beyond the opening thus made, at the cost of two lives. But the ranks were soon closed, and again the remaining barrels of the weapon sent down two more braves. Then the desperate Briton, with his keen knife between his clenched teeth, threw himself forward, and he disputed the entrance with the strength and courage of the lion.

"You will not get me alive, though I know you will gain the day in the end," he hissed into the teeth of the foe, whom he now drove back and who in turn now forced him from the entrance, bleeding as he was, from many a desperate wound. "The girl is dead. Oh, if I had her body, I'd drive you to hell with it!"

At this juncture several rifles from beyond the cave lent their voices to the roar of the conflict, in which one struggled against twenty, and three Indians staggered from the fissure, and fell headlong to the bottom of the ravine.

This unexpected attack in the rear caused the band to turn, and as they did so another rifle caused a fourth to join his silent companions.

Mitre St. Pierre glanced in the direction of the fatal shots, and beheld four figures reloading rifles with a dispatch that astonished him. They stood on the top of the bank at a densely wooded spot, diagonally opposite the attacked cave, and three of his new foes he recognized as Mark Morgan, Kenowatha and the Girl Avenger! The fourth was no doubt another of Wayne's spies, perhaps the very one in quest of whom he had reached the present spot!

"Curse the white dogs!" grated the Frenchman as he surveyed his new enemies. "Had they not come we should have caught the red-coated hound; but now we must fly. Oh, I want to meet them when white meets white and red! Braves, fly! fly! they load!" he cried to his braves, who needed no such command, for while he spoke they were fly-

ing down the ravine, and darting into fissures from which they knew that the ingenuity of no pale-face could dislodge them.

Before the quartette on the bank could prime their deadly weapons the fiendish trader followed the example of his band, and just as he darted into a cavernous opening the Girl Avenger's rifle cracked, and his arm fell at his side!

Then the four left the trees and entered the ravine. Before the cave they counted twelve dead bodies which attested the desperate nature of the man against whom they had fought. Perhaps a man never battled as Rudolph Runnion had done, for his neck was near the hangman's noose, and if a man will not fight to escape such disgraceful doom he must be a coward indeed.

But now the Briton had struck his last blow; the avengers had arrived too late to complete the work of death, for not a sound came from the cave as they advanced. The smoke, what remained of it, was being driven down the ravine by a strong west wind, which filled the cave with a rejuvenating atmosphere.

They had crossed the pebbly bed of the dry stream-course, and had reached the bank leading to the cave, when a husky voice, that spoke every syllable with the distinctness of determination, startled every ear.

"Back! my rifle is aimed at one of your hearts. I will not surrender, nor will I be taken alive. I have five loads left, four for you, the last for myself. The girl is here, but cold as ice."

The last words drew a cry of horror from Mark Morgan's lips, and nothing short of the united strength of his friends prevented him from rushing to certain destruction beneath the Briton's rifle.

CHAPTER XV

AN ATTACK IN THE REAR.

WHILE following the trail of Rudolph Runnion, a brief time prior to the battle in the ravine, Nanette and Kenowatha saw two plumed figures whom they took to be Indians. In-

stantly the youthful twain threw themselves behind trees; but a moment later were surprised to hear their names pronounced in good English.

"'Tis Mark!" cried the Girl Avenger, looking at Kenowatha, as she stepped from behind the poplar. "I know his voice as though I had followed it from girlhood. He and a brother spy are but a short distance in advance of the avenging army."

While the last words still quivered Nanette's lips, the two disguised scouts rushed forward, and a moment later the quartette had met.

Mark Morgan was horrified at the story that the Girl Avenger related, and again the trail of the red-coated assassin was trod by the terrors of the wood.

By-and-by the sounds of conflict fell upon their ears; they rushed forward, and, as the reader has seen, poured their deadly fire into the writhing ranks of the besiegers.

It was plainly evident to the quartette, after the major's words, that they had a truly desperate man to deal with, and they fell beyond range of his deadly rifle for consultation. They believed Effie dead; but whether she had fallen by the Briton's hand or perished by suffocation, they knew not. As it was, her death should be terribly avenged; though Wayne were left to chastise the savages without their potent aid, and they longed to follow Mad Anthony to victory.

Calmly, but with defiant mien, the disgraced soldier awaited the onset of his new enemies. He occupied a niche to the right of the opening into the cave, with his rifle grasped firmly in his hand, his pistols and knife at his feet, ready for instant use. He had been terribly mangled by the knife and hatchet during the late desperate conflict. The skin literally hung from his cheeks in strips; his arms were lacerated from elbow to wrist; a tomahawk had laid the right temple bare; and from other but minor wounds he suffered dreadfully.

He knew that his end was near; but he would perish like the wolf, and with his last breath bury his knife in the heart of a foe.

Since he had grasped Effie St. Pierre's cold hand, no sound had reached his ears from that gloomy portion of the cave, though he had listened attentively for it since the lull

in the storm of human passions. The thought that the girl was dead was as sweet to his mind as wildwood honey to the Indian's lips. She had died his, as he had sworn she should; he had outwitted his rivals at last, and Mark Morgan might press a corpse to his heart if he liked.

At last Mark Morgan's voice came to his ears.

"Rudolph Runnion, enough blood has been shed, and to prevent the useless effusion of more, I call upon you to surrender."

"You might have saved your breath," came the major's answer, quick upon the heels of the spy's sentence. "Parley is useless. If you want Ru' Runnion, come and take him—dead as a stone."

"Then we will take you—dead though it be!" was Mark Morgan's rejoinder, and scarcely a moment later a large bunch of burning brush was thrust into the mouth of the cave, by a long pole in the hands of the second scout.

"We're going to give you more smoke," was the taunt that Kenowatha threw to the major; "we're going to cheat you out of the shots you desire, and suffocate you as we would an obstinate bear."

An oath greeted the youth's words, and again seizing his coat the soldier sprung from the niche and fought the thick volumes with his old vim. He succeeded in forcing the fiery brush from the cave, and it rolled to the bottom of the ravine. But, the flames had communicated with some of the unburnt undergrowth to the left of the fissure, and again the treacherous wind was driving the demon right into his stronghold.

At this turn of ill-fortune the desperate man cursed the breeze; hurled his chosen anathemas into the face of his Maker, and pressed one of the pistols against his bruised temple.

"Yes, yes, they shall find me dead," he grated with fiendish triumph, as his finger touched the trigger; but, before the weapon could be discharged, a footstep toward the angle startled him, and turning he beheld, by the light of several burning boughs which had been left in the cave, a figure which he deemed the spirit of Effie St. Pierre.

The face of the figure was as white as the shroud of the departed, and the pistol fell from the noiseless hand of the

soldier, as the specter shot forward with a cry, as unnatural as the color of its face.

Something like a petrified bough was raised aloft above the girl's head; a moment later countless millions of stars danced before the Briton's face, and he staggered and fell at the foot of the niche.

Over his prostrate form sprung his pale vanquisher, and, an instant later, she sunk upon the rocks beyond the smoke, in the breath of the pure wind!

A cry followed her swoon, and four figures were bending over her, and looking from her pale face into each others' with astonishment.

"She lives! she lives!" cried Mark Morgan, as he saw the girl's lids unclose, and while he pressed her to his heart, his companions sprung fearlessly into the fissure, and a moment later reappeared with the senseless form of the British major.

"He's not going to escape the hangman, after all," said Kenowathia, as they laid their captive upon the rocks near his almost victim. "He's badly mangled, but a man who can stand what he has, can stand more."

A few moments witnessed Effie's complete recovery, and in a few words she related her vanquishing of the Briton. When Rudolph Runnion touched her hand in the gloomy cave she must have been in a deep swoon, that admirably counterfeited death, for she knew nothing of his visit, and when she came to her senses, the little apartment was filled with pure air, and a moment afterward she was startled by hearing the major's defiant words. Presently she knew that the red-skins had been vanquished, and that her lover was beyond the cave. Groping in the gloom her fingers clutched a bough denuded of bark, and swarming with knots which contributed to its toughness, and the burning brush enabled her to attack the Briton with the gratifying result just witnessed.

"I guess we're ready to go, now," said Mark, when Effie finished her narration, and assured him that she felt strong enough to keep pace with him through the wood. "Mad Anthony is near his prey now. To-morrow will witness the great battle."

"And the entire destruction of the Death League," hissed

the Girl Avenger. "To-morrow I shall meet its surviving members—Turkey-foot and Joe Girty, and, ere nightfall, the crimson crescent shall adorn their brows!"

"Effie, we'll hide you somewhere until after the battle," said Morgan.

"No! no! Mark. On the morrow I fight at your side. Have I not parents to avenge? Did not the red demons tear their scalps from their heads? Ay, and should I not have revenge? I will have it, Mark! You can not keep me from the red conflict! I will fight at your side, and my voice shall swell the victorious chorus of our people to-morrow night."

"Then so be it, Effie," said her lover. "May the God of battle watch over you, girl, for the morrow will be the bloodiest day ever witnessed by these old woods."

With some difficulty Rudolph Runnion was restored to consciousness, and his wounds carefully dressed. He chafed terribly over his situation, knowing the doom in store for him, and tried to free himself from the avengers' bonds.

At length the captors set out upon their return to Wayne's army, which they found encamped at Roche de Boeuf, just south of the present site of Waterville, where heavy earth-works were being erected.

The major was placed under a strong guard, with the knowledge that Wayne's intentions were to deliver him over to the avengers of blood immediately after the battle

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

IN the early evening of one of the balmy days of October, 1794, two figures ascended the eastern declivity of a remarkable promontory whose western summit gave a commanding view to the eye of an Indian town of considerable dimensions, in the center of a prairie-like country far below their feet. The dress and features of the twain at once would proclaim them Kenowatha and Mark Morgan. They were a day or so in advance of Wayne's army, which was

sweeping through the country like a whirlwind, destroying thousands of acres of ripened corn and burning the villages of the Indians, thus inflicting upon them the direst punishment that they could receive.

After the victory of the Fallen Timbers—in which not only the She-wolf and her young companion performed a most thrilling part, but in which Effie St. Pierre had herself killed the old trader as he was in the act of sacrificing Mark to his fiendish vengeance—a wounded Indian had discharged his rifle at Kenowatha and inflicted a wound which had caused a great amount of suffering, and the morning of the day in question was the first that witnessed his stepping again upon the war path. Nanette had left him for a few days, for the purpose of scouting up the Maumee, and had promised to meet the army at a certain place; but the promise had not been kept. Where was she? At the battle of Fallen Timbers she had succeeded in closing the fearful list of her victims, by slaying Turkey-foot in a manner which struck double terror to his fierce comrades; and Kenowatha had, almost at the moment, dealt the detested and blood-bespattered Girty his death-blow in a contest which hate and a thirst for vengeance in both made especially relentless; so that both the She-wolf and her friend had now no particular enemies to hunt them down. Where then was she?

The youth was growing uneasy at the Girl Avenger's absence, and though Mark assured him that she was safe—when even he feared the worst—the renegade's protege would not be comforted.

They had ascended the hill for the purpose of ascertaining whether the Indians intended to make a stand at this, their greatest village; but they soon learned that the panic still existed among the ranks of the red-men, for they were destroying their lodges, saving Wayne that labor.

The two spies had scarcely reached the summit of the mount, ere a yell announced that they had been discovered. A large party of stragglers returning to the village had caught sight of the heads elevated above the fissures of the promontory, and in less time than it takes the pen to relate it, the whole base of the mount was surrounded, and all hope of escape cut off!

Attack was not long delayed, for the savages had recognized the spies, and their hideous yells told them how they thirsted for their hearts' blood. Still the twain possessed an advantage, for from the narrow backbone of the mount, they were compelled to advance toward them in single file, and the form of each warrior must momentarily be exposed to their unerring rifles.

Warrior after warrior fell beneath the spies' rifles, when the savages prepared an attack on the flank, which could be successfully and fatally done by reaching an insulated rock lying in one of the ravines on the southern hillside. This rock once gained by the Indians, they could bring their foes under point-blank shot of their rifles and without possibility of escape.

The brave scouts saw the utter hopelessness of the situation, but like the truly brave never despaired. They looked into each other's faces, and though they spoke not their eyes said: "We'll fight to the bitter end: our lives shall cost the red-skins a score."

Presently Kenowatha saw a tall and swarthy figure preparing to spring from a cover so near the fatal rock that a single bound must reach it and all hope be destroyed. Knowing that all might depend upon one advantageous shot, and although but one inch of the warrior's body was exposed, he raised his rifle, and drew the deadly bead on the rash red-skin. But instead of the flint striking fire, and signing the brave's death-warrant, it flew into a thousand fragments, and the youth cursed his misfortune from the depths of his heart. Morgan was some distance away, guarding another threatened point, and Kenowatha could expect no help from him. The savage continued to approach the rock while the youth proceeded to adjust another flint, though he felt that the labor would prove fruitless.

Suddenly the Shawnee made the spring with the agility of the forest deer; but, instead of reaching the rock, he leaped ten feet in the air, and, with a chilling death-yell, he fell to the earth, and rolled fifty feet down the hill, shot by an unknown foe! A hundred cries from below reëchoed the shout, and the advantage so mysteriously gained by the scouts proved of short duration, for another swarthy warrior was advancing

toward the cover so lately occupied by his stricken brother. Now the attack in front claimed the scout's attention, and while thus engaged the brave leaped for the rock only to fall dead by the same mysterious shot. This last shot cast dismay into the ranks of the attacking party, and at sundown they retired to plan anew for the destruction of the whites.

The heavens now became shrouded with opaque clouds, and presently a figure resembling an animal was seen crawling toward the scouts.

"An Indian!" whispered Kenowatha, and his rifle was brought to bear upon the dark object.

Already his finger touched the trigger, when the peculiar cry of the young She-wolf greeted his ears, and his rifle fell from his shoulder.

"Nanette!"

The figure rose to an erect posture, and the next moment the Girl Avenger grasped the hands of the scouts. It was she who had delivered the mysterious shots. She had reached the Mount a short time in advance of the spies, and when surrounded by the Indians, concluded that she could assist them from her place of concealment as much as though at their sides.

An escape was now thought of, and in the darkness the trio left their position. Before they deserted the mount, the bodies of no less than thirteen Indians lay scalpless thereon, and the brows of some bore a red crescent, those of others a bloody cross!

As Kenowatha placed his mark upon the forehead of the last brave slain by his rifle, he took Nanette's hand.

"Girl," he whispered, "do you recollect your promise in the cave?"

"Yes, boy."

"Then to-night I sheathe my knife. Are you not tired of slaying? Have not the dead been avenged?"

"Yes, Kenowatha; the deeds of that night have been atoned for by the red perpetrators with the blood of the bravest of the hosts. I have no desire for further vengeance."

"Nor I, girl; my mark has become as terrible to the Indians as yours; they have seen it in the thicket, the brake, by the stream, and on the hills. You will keep your promise?"

"Yes, boy. God forbid that I should break it."

They avoided the guards at the base of the promontory, and though pursued, after leaving it, by a large party of Indians from the village, they made good their escape, and encountered Wayne's army early the following day.

At the treaty of Greenville, solemnized August 30th 1795, the assembled chiefs cast lowering glances upon the Beautiful Terror of the Maumee, who, standing beside Kenowatha, looked more beautiful than ever. The last cross and crescent on the butt of her rifle had received its complement of punctures, and the braves congratulated themselves that no longer would they live in fear of the ball that had sent so many of their brethren to the spirit-land. The fangs of the young She-wolf would molest them no more, and they breathed freer when beyond her presence at Mad Anthony's side.

The end is at hand.

After the battle of Fallen Timbers, Wayne surrendered Rudolph Runnion over to justice, and one calm September day, in the presence of the entire garrison of Fort Miami, the death of Firman Campbell was avenged by the unyielding law.

Kenowatha, whose true name, Clinton Wilkinson, had been revealed by a chief who participated in the massacres of the year that witnessed the doom of the boy's parents, accompanied by Nanette, turned their faces eastward, and a year later stood before a village altar, where they plighted vows of eternal constancy.

Long before this event, Mark Morgan called Effie his beautiful bride, and they witnessed the ceremony which made Kenowatha and Nanette one.

For all their trials in the wilderness of Ohio this was reward enough, and to-day their descendents number some of the noblest of the nation.

The vengeance of the Girl Avenger was never obliterated from the minds of the Indians, and to day the remnants of the dark tribes, dwelling on scanty reservations far toward the setting sun, relate the story of those dark times to shuddering listeners around the bivouac fires.

THE END.

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